3 Fc

Three Hours after Marriage.

A

COMEDY,

As it is Acted at the

Theatre Royal.

Rumpatur, quiſquis rumpitur invidia.
MART.

LONDON:
Printed for BERNARD LINTOT between the *Temple Gates, Fleetſtreet.* 1717.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

8 0 c

Advertiſement.

IT may be neceſſary to acquaint the Reader, that this Play is printed exactly as it is acted; for, tho' the Players in Compliance with the Taſte of the Town, broke it into five Parts in the Repreſentation; yet, as the Action pauſes, and the Stage is left vacant but three times, ſo it properly conſiſts but of three Acts, like the *Spaniſh* Comedies.

I muſt farther own the Aſſiſtance I have receiv'd in this Piece from two of my Friends; who, tho' they will not allow me the Honour of having their Names join'd with mine, cannot deprive me of the Pleaſure of making this Acknowledgment.

John Gay.

PROLOGUE.

AUTHORS are judg'd by ſtrange capricious Rules,
The Great Ones are thought mad, the Small Ones Fools:
Yet ſure the Beſt are moſt ſeverely fated,
For Fools are only laugh'd at, Wits are hated.
Blockheads with Reaſon Men of Senſe abhor;
But Fool 'gainſt Fool, is barb'rous civil War.
Why on all Authors then ſhould Criticks fall?
Since ſome have writ, and ſhewn no Wit at all.
Condemn a Play of theirs, and they evade it,
Cry, damn not us, but damn the French *that made it;*
By running Goods, theſe graceleſs Owlers gain;
Theirs are the Rules of France, *the Plots of* Spain:
But Wit, like Wine, from happier Climates brought,
Daſh'd by theſe Rogues, turns Engliſh *common Draught:*
They pall Moliere's *and* Lopez *ſprightly ſtrain,*
And teach dull Harlequins *to grin in vain.*
How ſhall our Author hope a gentle Fate,
Who dares moſt impudently—— not tranſlate.
It had been civil in theſe tickliſh Times,
To fetch his Fools and Knaves from foreign Climes;
Spaniard *and* French *abuſe to the World's End,*
But ſpare old England, *leſt you hurt a Friend.*
If any Fool is by our Satyr bit,
Let him hiſs loud, to ſhow you all—he's hit.

Poets

PROLOGUE.

Poets make Characters as Saleſmen *Cloaths,*
We take no Meaſure of your Fops and Beaus;
But here all Sizes and all Shapes ye meet,
And fit your ſelves—like Chaps in Monmouth-ſtreet.
Gallants look here, this * *Fool's-Cap has an Air——*
Goodly and ſmart,— with Ears of Iſſachar.
Let no One Manengroſs it, or confine:
A common Bleſſing! now 'tis yours, now mine.
But Poets in all Ages, had the Care
To keep this Cap, for ſuch as will, to wear;
Our Author has it now, for ev'ry Wit
Of Courſe reſign'd it to the next that writ:
And thus upon the Stage 'tis fairly † *thrown,*
Let him that takes it, wear it as his own.

---

* Shews a Cap with Ears. † Flings down the Cap, and *Exit.*

Dra-

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

Foſſile,	Doctors,	Mr. *Johnſon*,
Poſſum,		Mr. *Norris*.
Nautilus,		Mr. *Lee*.
Ptiſan,	Apothecary,	Mr. *Miller*.
Plotwell,		Mr. *Cibber*.
Underplot,		Mr. *Pinkethman*,
Sir *Tremendous*,		Mr. *Bowman*.
Firſt Player,		Mr. *Walker*.
Second Player,		Mr. *Quin*.
Sailor.		Mr. *Bickerſtaff*.

Footmen, Servants, *&c.*

WOMEN.

Mrs. *Townly*,	Mrs. *Oldfield*.
Mrs. *Phœbe Clinket*,	Mrs. *Bicknell*.
Sarſnet,	Mrs. *Hunt*.
Prue,	Mrs. *Willis*.

SCENE, A Room in *Foſſile*'s Houſe.

TIME, The ſame which is taken up in the Repreſentation.

Three

Three Hours after
MARRIAGE.
A
COMEDY.

ACT I.

Enter Fossile, *leading* Townley.

Fossile. WElcome, my Bride, into the Habitation of thy Husband. The Scruples of the Parson ——

Town. And the Fatigue of the Ceremony ——

Foss. Are at last well over.

Town. These Blank Licences are wonderful commodious. —— The Clergy have a noble Command, in being Rangers of the Park of Matrimony; produce but a Warrant, and they deliver a Lady into your Possession: but I have no Quarrel with them, since they have put me into so good Hands.

Foss. I now proclaim a solemn Suspension of Arms between Medicine and Diseases. Let Distempers suspend their malignant Influence, and

Powders, Pills, and Potions their Operations. Be this Day ſacred to my Love. I had rather hold this Hand of thine, than a Dutcheſs by the Pulſe.

Town. And I this, than a Hand of Matadores.

Foſſ. Who knows but your Relations may diſpute my Title to your Perſon? Come, my Dear, the Seal of the Matrimonial Bond is Conſummation.

Town. Alas! what will become of me!

Foſſ. Why are thy Eyes fix'd on the Ground? why ſo ſlow? and why this Trembling?

Town. Ah! heedleſs Creature that I was, to quit all my Relations, and truſt myſelf alone in the Hands of a ſtrange Man!

Foſſ. Courage, thou beſt of my Curioſities. Know that in Husband, is comprehended all Relations; in me thou ſeeſt a fond Father.

Town. Old enough, o' my Conſcience. [*Aſide.*

Foſſ. You may, you muſt truſt yourſelf with me.

Town. Do with me as you pleaſe: Yet ſure you cannot ſo ſoon forget the Office of the Church. Marriage is not to be undertaken wantonly, like Brute Beaſts. If you will tranſgreſs, the Sin be upon your own Head.

Foſſ. Great indeed is thy Virtue, and laudable is thy Modeſty. Thou art a Virgin, and I a Philoſopher: But learn, that no Animal Action, *quatenus animal*, is unbecoming of either of us. But hold! where am I going? Prithee, my Dear, of what Age art thou?

Town. Almoſt Three and Twenty.

Foss. And I almoſt at my grand Climacterick. What Occaſion have I for a Double-Night at theſe Years? She may be an *Alcmena*, but alas! I am no Thunderer. [*Aſide.*

Town. You ſeem ſomewhat diſturb'd; I hope you are well, Mr. *Foſſile.*

Foss. What Buſineſs have I in the Bed-chamber, when the Symptoms of Age are upon me? Yet hold, this is the famous Corroborative of *Crollius*; in this Vial are included Sons and Daughters. Oh, for a Draught of the *Aqua Magnanimitatis* for a Vehicle! fifty Drops of *Liquid Laudanum* for her Doſe would but juſt put us upon a *Par. Laudanum* would ſettle the preſent Ataxy of her Animal Spirits, and prevent her being too watchful. [*Aſide.*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir your Piſtachoe-Porridge is ready. [*Exit.*

Foss. Now I think of it, my Dear; *Venus*, which is in the firſt Degree of *Capricorn*, does not culminate till Ten; an Hour, if Aſtrology is not fallible, ſucceſsful in Generation.

Town. I am all Obedience, Sir.

Foss. How ſhall I reward thee for ſo much Goodneſs? Let our Wedding as yet be a Secret in the Family. In the mean time I'll introduce my Niece *Phœbe Clinket* to your Acquaintance: But alas, the poor Girl has a Procidence of the Pineal Gland, which has occaſioned a Rupture in her Underſtanding. I took her into my Houſe

to regulate my Oeconomy; but inſtead of Puddings, ſhe makes Paſtorals; or when ſhe ſhould be raiſing Paſte, is raiſing ſome Ghoſt in a new Tragedy. In ſhort, my Houſe is haunted by all the underling Players, broken Bookſellers, half-voic'd Singing-Maſters, and diſabled Dancing-Maſters in Town. In a former Will I had left her my Eſtate; but I now reſolve that Heirs of my own Begetting ſhall inherit. Yonder ſhe comes in her uſual Occupation. Let us mark her a while.

Enter Clinket, *and her Maid bearing a Writing-Deſk on her Back.* Clinket *Writing, her Head-dreſs ſtain'd with Ink, and Pens ſtuck in her Hair.*

Maid. I had as good carry a Raree-Show about the Street. Oh! how my Back akes!

Clink. What are the Labours of the Back to thoſe of the Brain? thou Scandal to the Muſes. I have now loſt a Thought worth a Folio, by thy Impertinence.

Maid. Have not I got a Crick in my Back already, that will make me good for nothing, with lifting your great Books?

Clink. Folio's, call them, and not great Books, thou Monſter of Impropriety: But have Patience, and I will remember the three Gallery-Tickets I promis'd thee at my New Tragedy.

Maid. I ſhall never get my Head-Cloaths Clear-ſtarch'd at this rate.

Clink. Thou Deſtroyer of Learning, thou worſe than a Book-worm; thou haſt put me beyond all

all Patience. Remember how my Lyrick Ode bound about a Tallow-Candle; thy wrapping up Snuff in an Epigram; nay, the unworthy Uſage of my Hymn to *Apollo*, filthy Creature! Read me the laſt Lines I writ upon the *Deluge*, and take care to pronounce them as I taught you.

Maid. Swell'd with a Dropſy, ſickly Nature lies,
And melting in a Diabetes, dies.
[*Reads with an affected Tone.*

Clink. Still without Cadence!

Maid. Swell'd with a Dropſy ——

Clink. Hold. I conceive ——

The roaring Seas o'er the tall Woods have broke,
And Whales now perch upon the ſturdy Oak.

Roaring? Stay. Rumbling, roaring, ruſtling. no; raging Seas. [*Writing.*

The raging Seas o'er the tall Woods have broke,
Now perch, thou Whale, upon the ſturdy Oak.

Sturdy Oak? No; ſteady, ſtrong, ſtrapping, ſtiff. Stiff? No, ſtiff is too ſhort.

Foſſile *and* Townley *come forward.*

What Feaſt for Fiſh! Oh too luxurious Treat!
When hungry Dolphins feed on Butchers Meat.

Foſſ. Niece, why Niece, Niece! Oh, *Melpomene*, thou Goddeſs of Tragedy, ſuſpend thy Influence for a Moment, and ſuffer my Niece to give me a rational Anſwer. This Lady is a Friend of mine; her preſent Circumſtances oblige her to take Sanctuary in my Houſe; treat her with the utmoſt Civility. Let the Tea-Table be made ready.

Clink. Madam, excuſe this Abſence of Mind; my animal Spirits had deſerted the Avenues of my Senſes, and retired to the Receſſes of the Brain, to contemplate a beautiful Idea. I could not force the vagrant Creatures back again into their Poſts, to move thoſe Parts of the Body that expreſs Civility.

Town. A rare Affected Creature this! If I miſtake not, Flattery will make her an uſeful Tool for my Purpoſe. [*Aſide.*

[Exeunt *Townley*, *Clinket*, and *Maid.*

Foſſ. Her Jewels, her Strong Box, and all her Things left behind! If her Uncle ſhould diſcover her Marriage, he may lay an Embargo upon her Goods. —— I'll ſend for them.

Enter a Boy with a Letter.

Boy. This is the Ho-ho-houſe.

Foſſ. Child, whom doſt thou want?

Boy. Miſtreſs *Townley*'s Ma-ma-maid.

Foſſ. What is your Buſineſs?

Boy. A L-l-letter.

Foſſ. Who ſent this Letter?

Boy. O-o-one.

Foſſ. Give it me, Child. An honeſt Boy. Give it me, and I'll deliver it my ſelf. A very honeſt Boy.

Boy. So. [Exit *Boy.*

Foſſ. There are now no more Secrets between us. Man and Wife are One.

Madam,

Madam, Either I miſtake the Encouragement I have had, or I am to be happy to-Night. I hope the ſame Perſon will compleat her good Offices: I ſtand to Articles. The Ring is a fine one; and I ſhall have the Pleaſure of putting it on the firſt time.

This from your impatient, R. P.

In the name of Beelzebub, what is this? *Encouragement! Happy to-Night! ſame Perſon! good Offices!* Whom haſt thou married, poor *Foſſile?* Couldſt thou not divert thyſelf ſtill with the Spoils of Quarries and Coal-pits, thy Serpents and thy Salamanders, but thou muſt have a living Monſter too! 'Sdeath! what a Jeſt ſhall I be to our Club! Is there no Rope among my Curioſities? Shall I turn her out of doors, and proclaim my Infamy; or lock her up, and bear my Misfortunes? Lock her up! Impoſſible. One may ſhut up Volatile Spirits, pen up the Air, confine Bears, Lyons and Tygers, nay, keep even your Gold: But a Wanton Wife who can keep?

Enter Townley.

Town. Mrs. *Clinket*'s Play is to be read this Morning at the Tea-table: Will you come and Divert your ſelf, Sir?

Foſſ. No: I want to be Alone.

Town. I hope my Company is not Troubleſome already. I am as yet a Bride; not a Wife. [*Sighs.*] What means this ſudden Change? [*Aſide.*] Conſider, Mr. *Foſſile,* you want your Natural Reſt: The Bed would Refreſh you. Let me ſit by you.

Foſſ. My Head akes, and the Bed always makes it worſe.

Town. Is it hereabouts? [*Rubs his Temples.*

Foſſ. Too ſure. [*Turns from her.*

Town. Why ſo Fretful, Mr. *Foſſile?*

Foſſ. No; I'll diſſemble my Paſſion, and pump her. [*Aſide.*] Exceſs of Joy, my Dear, for my good Fortune overcomes me. I am ſomewhat Vertiginous, I can hardly ſtand.

Town. I hope I was ordain'd for thy Support.

Foſſ. My Diſorder now begins to diſſipate: It was only a little Flatulency, occaſion'd by ſomething hard of Digeſtion. But pray, my Dear, did your Uncle ſhut you up ſo cloſe from the Converſation of Mankind?

Town. Sarſnet and *Shock* were my only Company.

Foſſ. A very prudent Young-woman this *Sarſnet*; ſhe was undoubtedly a good and faithful Friend in your Solitude.

Town. When it was her Intereſt; but I made no Intimacies with my Chamber-Maid.

Foſſ. But was there no Lover offer'd his Service to a Lady in Diſtreſs?

Town. Tongue, be upon thy Guard: Theſe Queſtions muſt be deſign'd to trap me. [*Aſide.*

A Wo-

A Woman of my Condition can't well escape Importunity.

Foss. What was the Name of that disagreeable Fellow, who, you told me, teaz'd you so?

Town. His Name? I think he had a thousand Names. In one Letter he was *Myrtillo*, in another *Corydon*, *Alexis*, and I don't know what.

Enter Sarsnet *in Haste to her Mistress: He runs and embraces her with great Earnestness.*

Foss. Dear Mrs. *Sarsnet*, how am I obliged to thee for thy Services; thou hast made me happy beyond Expression. —— I shall find another Letter upon her. [*Aside.*

[*He gets his Hand into* Sarsnet's *Pocket, as searching for a Letter.*

[*Whenever* Sarsnet *goes to whisper her Mistress, he gets between them.*

Enter Ptisan.

Ptisan. Mrs. *Colloquintida* complains still of a Dejection of Appetite; she says that the Genevre is too cold for her Stomach.

Foss. Give her a Quieting Draught; but let us not interrupt one another. Good Mr. *Ptisan*, we are upon Business.

[Fossile *gets between* Sarsnet *and* Townley.

Ptis. The Colonel's Spitting is quite suppress'd.

Foss.

Foſſ. Give him a Quieting Draught. Come to Morrow, Mr. *Ptiſan*; I can ſee no body till then.

Ptiſ. Lady *Varniſh* finds no Benefit of the Waters, for the Pimple on the tip of her Noſe ſtill continues.

Foſſ. Give her a Quieting Draught.

Ptiſ. Mrs. *Prudentia*'s Tympany grows bigger and bigger. What, no Pearl Cordial! muſt I quiet them all?

Foſſ. Give them all Quieting Draughts, I ſay, or Bliſter them all, as you pleaſe. Your Servant Mr. *Ptiſan.*

Ptiſ. But then Lady *Giddy*'s Vapours. She calls her Chamber-maids Nymphs; for ſhe fanſies herſelf *Diana*, and her Husband *Acteon.*

Foſſ. I can attend no Patient till to Morrow. Give her a Quieting Draught, I ſay.

[*Whenever* Foſſile *goes to conduct* Ptiſan *to the Door*, Sarſnet *and* Townley *attempt to Whiſper*; Foſſile *gets between them, and* Ptiſan *takes that Opportunity of coming back.*

Ptiſ. Then, Sir, there is Miſs *Chitty* of the Boarding-School has taken in no natural Suſtenance for this Week, but a Halfpeny-worth of Charcoal, and one of her Mittins.

Foſſ. Sarſnet, do you wait on Mr. *Ptiſan* to the Door. To Morrow let my Patients know I'll viſit round. [*A Knocking at the Door.*

Ptiſ.

Ptiſ. Oh, Sir, here is a Servant of the Counteſs of *Hippokekoana*. The Emetick has overwrought, and ſhe is in Convulſions.

Foſſ. This is unfortunate. Then I muſt go. Mr. *Ptiſan*, my Dear has ſome Buſineſs with me in Private. Retire into my Cloſet a Moment, and divert your ſelf with the Pictures. There lies your Way, Madam. [*To* Sarſnet.

[Exit Townley *at one Door, and* Sarſnet *at the other.*

Mr. *Ptiſan*, pray do you run before, and tell them I am juſt coming. [Exit *Ptiſan.*

All my Diſtreſſes come on the Neck of one another. Should this Fellow get to my Bride before I have Bedded her, in a Collection of Cuckolds, what a Rarity ſhould I make! What ſhall I do? I'll lock her up. Lock up my Bride? My Peace and my Honour demand it, and it ſhall be ſo. [*Locks the Door.*] *Thomas, Thomas!*

Enter Footman.

I dreamt laſt Night I was robb'd. The Town is over-run with Rogues. Who knows but the Raſcal that ſent the Letter may be now in the Houſe? [*Aſide.*] Look up the Chimney, ſearch all the dark Cloſets, the Coal-hole, the Flower-pots, and forget not the empty But in the Cellar. Keep a ſtrict

a ſtrict Watch at the Door, and let no body in till my Return.

[Exit *Footman.* *A Noiſe at the Cloſet-Door.*]

(*Within.*) Who's there? —— I'm lock'd in. Murder! Fire!

Foſſ. Dear Madam, I beg your Pardon.

[*Unlocks the Door.* *Enter* Townley.]

'Tis well you call'd. I am ſo apt to lock this Door; an Action meerly mechanical, not ſpontaneous.

Town. Your Conduct, Mr. *Foſſile*, for this Quarter of an Hour has been ſomewhat myſterious. It has ſuggeſted to me what I almoſt bluſh to name; your locking me up, confirms this Suſpicion. Pray ſpeak plainly, what has cauſed this Alteration? [Foſſile *ſhews her the Letter.* Is this all? [*Gives him the Letter back.*

Foſſ. (reads) *Either I miſtake the Encouragement I have had.* What Encouragement?

Town. From my Uncle, —— if I muſt be your Interpreter.

Foſſ. *Or I am to be happy to Night.*

Town. To be Married. —— If there can be Happineſs in that State.

Foſſ. *I hope the ſame Perſon.*

Town. Parſon. Only a Word miſ-ſpell'd. —— Here's Jealouſy for you!

Foſſ. *Will compleat her good Offices.* A She-Parſon, I find!

Town.

Town. He is a *Welſhman.* And the *Welſh* always ſay *Her* inſtead of His.

Foſſ. I ſtand to Articles.

Town. Of Jointure.

Foſſ. The Ring is a fine one, and I ſhall have the Pleaſure of putting it on my ſelf.

Town. Who ſhould put on the Wedding-Ring but the Bridegroom?

Foſſ. I beſeech thee, pardon thy dear Husband. Love and Jealouſy are often Companions, and Exceſs of both had quite obnubilated the Eyes of my Underſtanding.

Town. Barbarous Man! I could forgive thee, if thou hadſt poiſon'd my Father, debauch'd my Siſter, kill'd my Lap-Dog; but to murder my Reputation! [*Weeps.*

Foſſ. Nay, I beſeech thee, forgive me. [*Kneels.*

Town. I do: But upon Condition your jealous Fit never returns. To a Jealous Man a Whiſper is Evidence, and a Dream Demonſtration. A civil Letter makes him thoughtful, an innocent Viſit mad. I ſhall try you, Mr. *Foſſile*; for don't think I'll be deny'd Company.

Foſſ. Nay, prithee, my Dear; I own I have abuſed thee. But leſt my Marriage, and this ſimple Story ſhould take Air in the Neigbourhood, to Morrow we will retire into the Country together, till the Secret is blown over. I am call'd to a Patient. In leſs than half an Hour I'll be with you again, my Dear. [Exit *Foſſile.*

Town. Plotwell's Letter had like to have ruin'd me. 'Twas a neglect in me, not to intruſt him with

with the Secret of my Marriage. A Jealous Bridegroom! Every Poiſon has its Antidote; as Credulity is the Cauſe, ſo it ſhall be the Cure of his Jealouſy. To Morrow I muſt be ſpirited away into the Country; I'll immediately let *Plotwell* know of my Diſtreſs: and this little Time with Opportunity, even on his Wedding-Day, ſhall finiſh him a compleat Husband. Intrigue aſſiſt me! and I'll act a Revenge that might have been worthy the moſt celebrated Wife in *Boccace*.

Enter Plotwell *and* Clinket.

Hah! *Plotwell!* which way got he hither? I muſt caution him to be upon his Guard.

Plotw. Madam, I am agreeably ſurpriz'd to find you here.

Town. Me, Sir? you are certainly miſtaken, for I don't remember I ever ſaw you before.

Plotw. Madam, I beg your Pardon. How like a Truth ſounds a Lye from the Tongue of a fine Woman. [*Aſide.*

Clink. This, Madam, is Mr. *Plotwell*; a Gentleman who is ſo infinitely obliging, as to introduce my Play on the Theatre, by fathering the unworthy Iſſue of my Muſe, at the reading it this Morning.

Plotw. I ſhould be proud, Madam, to be a real Father to any of your Productions.

Clink. Mighty Juſt. Ha, ha, ha. You know, Mr. *Plotwell*, that both a Parrot and a Player can utter human Sounds, but we allow neither

of

of them to be a Judge of Wit. Yet ſome of thoſe People have had the Aſſurance to deny almoſt all my Performances the Privilege of being Acted. Ah! what a *Goût de travers* rules the Underſtandings of the Illiterate!

Plotw. There are ſome, Madam, that nauſeate the ſmell of a Roſe.

[*Whenever* Plotwell *and* Townley *endeavour to talk, ſhe interrupts them.*

Clink. If this Piece be not rais'd to the Sublime, let me henceforth be ſtigmatiz'd as a Reptile in the Duſt of Mediocrity. I am perſuaded, Sir, your adopted Child will do you no Diſhonour.

Town. Pray, Madam, what is the Subject?

Clink. Oh! beyond every Thing. So adapted for tragical Machines! So proper to excite the Paſſions! Not in the leaſt encumber'd with Epiſodes! The *Kray-ſemblance* and the *Miraculous* are linkt together with ſuch Propriety!

Town. But the Subject, Madam?

Clink. The *Univerſal Deluge*. I choſe that of *Deucalion* and *Pyrrha*, becauſe neither our Stage nor Actors are hallow'd enough for Sacred Story.

Plotw. But, Madam——[*To* Townley.

Clink. What juſt occaſion for noble Deſcription! Theſe Players are exceeding Dilatory.——In the mean time, Sir, ſhall I be obliged to you and this Lady for a Rehearſal of a Scene that I have been juſt touching up with ſome lively Strokes.

Town.

Town. I dare aſſure you, Madam, it will be a Pleaſure to us both. I'll take this occaſion to inform you of my preſent Circumſtances. [*To* Plotwell.

Clink. Imagine! *Deucalion* and *Pyrrha* in their Boat. They paſs by a Promontory, where ſtands Prince *Hæmon* a former Lover of *Pyrrha*'s, ready to be ſwallowed up by the devouring Flood. She preſſes her Husband to take him into the Boat. Your Part, Sir, is *Hæmon*; the Lady perſonates *Pyrrha*; and I repreſent *Deucalion*. To you, Sir. [*Gives* Plotwell *the Manuſcript.*

Plotw. What ho, there Soulder! [*reads.*

Town. ——— Hæmon!

Plotw. ——————— *Yes, 'tis* Hæmon!

Town. Thou ſeeſt me now ſail'd from my former Lodging,
Beneath a Husband's Ark; yet ſain I would reward
Thy proffer'd Love. But Hæmon, *ah, I fear*
To Morrow's Eve will hide me in the Country.

Clink. Not a Syllable in the Part! Wrong, all wrong!

Plotw. Through all the Town, with diligent Enquiries,
I ſought my Pyrrha

Clink. Beyond all Patience! the Part, Sir, lies before you; you are never to perplex the *Drama* with Speeches *Extempore.*

Plotw. Madam, 'tis what the top Players often do.

Town. Though Love denies, Compaſſion bids me ſave thee. [Plotwell *kiſſes her.*

Clink.

Clink. Fye Mr. *Plotwell*; this is againſt all the Decorum of the Stage; I will no more allow the Libertiniſm of Lip-Embraces than the Barbarity of Killing on the Stage. Your beſt Tragedians, like the Ladys of Quality in a Viſit, never turn beyond the back-part of the Cheek to a Salute, as thus Mr. *Plotwell.* [*Kiſſes Plotwell.*

Plotw. I don't find in *Ariſtotle* any Precept againſt Kiſſing.

Clink. Yet I would not ſtand upon the brink of an Indecorum.

Plotw. True, Madam, the finiſhing Stroke of Love and Revenge ſhould never ſhock the Eyes of an Audience. But I look upon a Kiſs in a Comedy to be upon a Par with a Box on the Ear in Tragedy, which is frequently given and taken by your beſt Authors.

Clink. Mighty juſt! for a Lady can no more put up a Kiſs than a Gentleman a Box on the Ear. Take, my Muſe, Sir, into your Protection [*gives him her Play*] the Players I ſee are here. Your perſonating the Author will infallibly introduce my Play on the Stage, and ſpite of their Prejudice, make the Theatre ring with Applauſe, and teach even that injudicious *Canaille* to know their own Intereſt.

Enter Sir Tremendous *with two Players.*

Plotw. Gentlemen, This Lady who Smiles on my Perſormances, has permitted me to introduce you and my Tragedy to her Tea-Table.

Clink. Gentlemen, you do me Honour.

1ſt Play. Suffer us, Sir, to recommend to your Acquaintance, the famous Sir *Tremendous*, the greateſt Critick of our Age.

Plotw, Sir *Tremendous*, I rejoice at your Preſence; though no Lady that has an Antipathy, ſo ſweats at a Cat, as ſome Authors at a Critick. Sir *Tremendous*, Madam, is a Gentleman who can inſtruct the Town to diſlike what has pleaſed them, and to be pleaſed with what they diſliked.

Sir *Trem.* Alas! what ſignifies one good Palate when the Taſte of the whole Town is viciated. There is not in all this *Sodom* of Ignorance Ten righteous Criticks, who do not judge things backward.

Clink. I perfectly agree with Sir *Tremendous*: Your modern Tragedies are ſuch egregious Stuff, they neither move Terror nor Pity.

Plotw. Yes, Madam, the Pity of the Audience on the Firſt Night, and the Terror of the Author for the Third. Sir *Tremendous*'s Plays indeed have rais'd a ſublimer Paſſion, Aſtoniſhment.

Clink. I perceive here will be a Wit-Combat between theſe Beaux-Eſprits. *Prue*, be ſure you ſet down all the Similes.

Prue *retires to the back part of the Stage with Pen and Ink.*

Sir *Trem.* The Subjects of moſt modern Plays are as ill choſen as ——

Plotw. The Patrons of their Dedications.

Clink. *makes Signs to* Prue.

Sir *Trem.*

Sir *Trem.* Their Plots as ſhallow ——

Plotw. As thoſe of bad Poets againſt new Plays.

Sir *Trem.* Their Epiſodes as little of a Peice to the main Action, as ——

Clink. A black Gown with a Pink-colour'd Peticoat. Mark that *Prue.* [*aſide.*

Sir *Trem.* Their Sentiments are ſo very delicate--

Plotw. That like whipt Syllabub they are loſt before they are taſted.

Sir *Trem.* Their Diction ſo low, that--that——

Plotw. Why, that their Friends are forced to call it Simplicity.

1ſt Play. Sir, to the Play if you pleaſe.

2d Play. We have a Rehearſal this Morning.

Sir *Trem.* And then their Thefts are ſo open——

Plot. That the very *French* Taylors can diſcover them.

Sir *Trem.* O what Felony from the Ancients! What Petty-Larcenry from the Moderns! There is the famous *Iphigenia* of *Racine*, he ſtole his *Agamemnon* from *Seneca*, who ſtole it from *Euripides*, who ſtole it from *Homer*, who ſtole it from-all the Ancients before him. In ſhort there is nothing ſo execrable as our moſt taking Tragedys.

1ſt Play. O! but the immortal *Shakeſpear*, Sir,

Sir *Trem.* He had no Judgment.

2d Play. The famous *Ben. Johnſon!*

Clink. Dry.

1ſt Play. The tender *Otway!*

Sir *Trem.* Incorrect.

2d Play. Etheridge!

Clink. Meer Chit-chat.

1st Play. *Dryden!*

Sir *Trem.* Nothing but a Knack of Verſifying.

Clink. Ah! dear Sir *Tremendous*, there is that *Delicateſſe* in your Sentiments!

Sir *Trem.* Ah Madam! there is that Juſtneſs in your Notions!

Clink. I am ſo charm'd with your manly Penetration!

Sir *Trem.* I with your profound Capacity!

Clink. That I am not able ——

Sir *Trem.* That it is impoſſible ——

Clink. To conceive ——

Sir *Trem.* To expreſs ——

Clink. With what Delight I embrace ——

Sir *Trem.* With what Pleaſure I enter into ——

Clink. Your Ideas, moſt learned Sir *Tremendous!*

Sir *Trem.* Your Sentiments, moſt divine Mrs. *Clinket.*

2d Play. The Play, for Heaven's Sake, the Play.

[*A Tea Table brought in.*]

Clink. This finiſh'd *Drama* is too good for an Age like this.

Plotw. *The univerſal Deluge*, or the Tragedy of *Deucalion* and *Pyrrha.* [*reads,*

Clink. Mr. *Plotwell*, I will not be deny'd the Pleaſure of reading it, you will pardon me.

1ſt Play. The Deluge! the Subject ſeems to be too *recherché.*

Clink. A Subject untouch'd either by Ancients or Moderns, in which are Terror and Pity in perfection.

1ſt Play.

1*ſt Play.* The Stage will never bear it, can you ſuppoſe, Sir, that a Box of Ladies will ſit Three Hours to ſee a rainy Day, and a Sculler in a Storm? Make your beſt of it, I know it can be nothing elſe.

2*d Play.* If you pleaſe, Madam, let us hear how it opens.

Clink. [reads.] *The Scene opens, and diſcovers the Heavens cloudy. A prodigious Shower of Rain, at a diſtance appears the Top of the Mountain* Parnaſſus, *all the Fields beneath are over-flowed, there are ſeen Cattle and Men ſwimming. The Tops of Steeples riſe above the Flood, with Men and Women perching on their Weather-cocks* ——

Sir *Trem.* Begging your Pardon, Sir, I believe it can be proved, that Weather-cocks are of a modern Invention. Beſides, if Stones were diſſolved, as a late Philoſopher hath proved, how could Steeples ſtand?

Plotw. I don't inſiſt upon Trifles. Strike it out.

Clink. Strike it out! conſider what you do. In this they ſtrike at the very Foundation of the *Drama.* Don't almoſt all the Perſons of your Second Act ſtart out of Stones that *Deucalion* and *Pyrrha* threw behind them? This Cavil is levell'd at the whole Syſtem of the Reparation of human Race.

1*ſt Play.* Then the Shower is abſurd.

Clink. Why ſhould not this Gentleman rain, as well as other Authors ſnow and thunder? —— [reads.] *Enter* Deucalion *in a ſort of Waterman's Habit, leading his Wife* Pyrrha *to a Boat*--Her firſt Diſtreſs is about her going back to fetch a Casket of Jewels.

Mind, how he imitates your great Authors. The firſt Speech has all the Fire of *Lee.*

Tho' Heav'n wrings all the Sponges of the Sky,
And pours down Clouds, at once each Cloud a Sea.
Not the Spring-Tides——

Sir *Trem.* There were no Spring-Tides in the *Mediterranean*, and conſequently *Deucalion* could not make that Simile.

Clink. A Man of *Deucalion*'s Quality might have travelled beyond the *Mediterranean*, and ſo your Objection is anſwered. Obſerve, Sir *Tremendous*, the Tenderneſs of *Otway*, in this Anſwer of *Pyrrha.*

——————*Why do the Stays*
Taper my Waſte, but for thy circling Arms?

Sir *Trem.* Ah! *Anachroniſms!* Stays are a modern Habit, and the whole Scene is monſtrous, and againſt the Rules of Tragedy.

Plotw. I ſubmit Sir,——out with it.

Clink. Were the Play mine, you ſhould gaſh my Fleſh, mangle my Face, any thing ſooner than ſcratch my Play.

Plotw. Blot and inſert wherever you pleaſe —— I ſubmit my ſelf to your Judgment.

Plotwell *riſes, and diſcourſes apart with* Townley.

Sir *Trem.* Madam, Nonſence and I have been at variance from my Cradle, it ſets my Underſtanding on Edge.

2d Play. Indeed, Madam, with Submiſſion, and I think I have ſome Experience of the Stage, this Play will hardly take.

Clink.

Clink. The worſt Lines of it would be ſufficiently clapt, if it had been writ by a known Author, or recommended by one.

Sir *Trem.* Between you and I Madam, who underſtand better things, this Gentleman knows nothing of Poetry.

1*ſt Play.* The Gentleman may be an honeſt Man, but he is a damn'd Writer, and it neither can take, nor ought to take.

Sir *Trem.* If you are the Gentleman's Friend, and value his Reputation, adviſe him to burn it.

Clink. What Struggles has an unknown Author to vanquiſh Prejudice! Suppoſe this Play acts but Six Nights, his next may play Twenty. Encourage a young Author, I know it will be your Intereſt.

2*d Play.* I would ſooner give Five Hundred Pounds than bring ſome Plays on the Stage; an Audience little conſiders whether 'tis the Author or the Actor that is hiſs'd, our Character ſuffers.

1*ſt Play.* Damn our Character — We ſhall loſe Money by it.

Clink. I'le depoſite a Sum my ſelf upon the Succeſs of it. Well, ſince it is to be play'd — I will prevail upon him to ſtrike out ſome few things.— Take the Play, Sir *Tremendous.*

Sir Tremendous *reads in a muttering Tone.*

Sir *Trem.* Abſurd to the laſt Degree [*ſtrikes out.*] palpable Nonſenſe! [*ſtrikes out.*]

Clink. What all thoſe Lines! ſpare thoſe for a Lady's Sake, for thoſe indeed, I gave him.

Sir *Trem.* Such Stuff! [*ſtrikes out.*] abominable! [*ſtrikes out.*] moſt execrable!

1*ſt Play.* This Thought muſt out.

2*d Play.* Madam, with Submiſſion, this Metaphor.

1*ſt Play.* This whole Speech.

Sir *Trem.* The Fable!

Clink. To you I anſwer —

1*ſt Play.* The Characters!

Clink. To you I anſwer —

Sir *Trem.* The Diction!

Clink. And to you---Ah, hold, hold — I'm butcher'd, I'm maſſacred. For Mercy's Sake! murder, murder! ah! [*faints.*

Enter Foſſile *peeping at the Door.*

Foſſile. My Houſe turn'd to a Stage! and my Bride playing her Part too! what will become of me? but I'le know the Bottom of all this. [*aſide.* I am ſurpriſed to ſee ſo many Patients here ſo early. What is your Diſtemper, Sir?

1*ſt Play.* The Cholick, Sir, by a Surfeit of green Tea and damn'd Verſes.

Foſſile. Your Pulſe is very high, Madam. [*to* Townley.] You ſympathize, I perceive, for yours is ſomewhat feveriſh. [*to* Plotwell.] But I believe I ſhall be able to put off the Fit for this time. And as for you, Neice, you have got the poetical Itch, and are poſſeſs'd with Nine Devils, your Nine Muſes; and thus I commit them and their Works to the Flames. [*Takes up a Heap of Papers, and flings them into the Fire.*]

Clink. Ah! I am an undone Woman.

Plotw.

Plotw. Has he burnt any Bank-Bills, or a new *Mechlen* Head-Dreſs?

Clink. My Works! my Works!

1ſt Play. Has he deſtroy'd the Writings of an Eſtate, or your Billet-doux?

Clink. A Pindarick Ode! five Similes! and half an Epilogue!

2d Player. Has he thrown a new Fan, or your Pearl Necklace into the Flames?

Clink. Worſe, worſe! The tag of the Acts of a new Comedy! a Prologue ſent by a Perſon of Quality! three Copies of recommendatory Verſes! and two Greek Mottos!

Foſſile. Gentlemen, if you pleaſe to walk out.

2d Player. You ſhall have our poſitive Anſwer concerning your Tragedy, Madam, in an hour or two.

[Exit *Sir Tremendous*, *Plotwell* and *Players.*

Foſſile. Though this Affair looks but ill; yet I will not be over-raſh: What ſays *Libanius? a falſe Accuſation often recoils upon the Accuſer*; and I have ſuffer'd already by too great Precipitation.

[*Exit Foſſile.*

Enter Sarſnet.

Townly. A narrow Eſcape, *Sarſnet! Plotwell's* Letter was intercepted and read by my Husband.

Sarſnet. I tremble every Joint of me. How came you off?

Townly. Invention flow'd, I Ly'd, he Believ'd. True Wife, true Husband!

Sarſnet.

Sarſnet. I have often warn'd you, Madam, againſt this Superfluity of Gallants; you ought at leaſt to have clear'd all Mortgages upon your Perſon before you Leas'd it out for Life. Then, beſides *Plotwell*, you are every moment in danger of *Underplot*, who attends on *Plotwell* like his Shadow; he is unlucky enough to ſtumble upon your Husband, and then I'm ſure his Shatterbrains would undo us at once.

Townly. Thy Wit and Induſtry *Sarſnet* muſt help me out. To day is Mine, to morrow is my Husbands.

Sarſnet. But ſome ſpeedy Method muſt be thought of, to prevent your Letters from falling into his Hands.

Townly. I can put no confidence in my Landlady Mrs. *Chambers*, ſince our Quarrel at Parting. So I have given Orders to her Maid to direct all Letters and Meſſages hither, and I have placed my own truſty Servant *Hugh* at the Door to receive them—— but ſee, yonder comes my Husband, I'll retire to my Cloſet. [*Exit Townly* and *Sarſnet.*

Enter Foſſile.

Foſſile. O Marriage, thou bittereſt of Potions, and thou ſtrongeſt of Aſtringents! This *Plotwell* that I found talking with her muſt certainly be the Perſon that ſent the Letter. But if I have a *Briſtol* Stone put upon me inſtead of a Diamond, why ſhould I by Experiments ſpoil its Luſtre? She is Handſome, that is certain. Could I but keep her to my ſelf for the Future! Cuckoldom is an acute

Caſe,

Caſe, it is quickly over; when it takes Place, it admits of no Remedy but Palliatives. —— Be it how it will, while my Marriage is a Secret ——

Within. Bleſs the noble Doctor *Foſſile* and his honourable Lady. The City Muſick are come to Wiſh him much Joy of his Marriage. [*A flouriſh of Fiddles.*

Foſſile. Joy and Marriage, never were two Words ſo coupled!

Within. Much Happineſs attend the learned Doctor *Foſſile* and his worthy and virtuous Lady. The Drums and Trumpets of his Majeſty's Guards are come to Salute him —— [*A flouriſh of Drums and Trumpets.*

Foſſile. Ah *Foſſile!* wretched *Foſſile!* into what State haſt thou brought thy ſelf! thy Diſgrace proclaim'd by Beat of Drum! new Married men are treated like thoſe bit by a *Tarantula*, both muſt have Muſick: But where are the Notes that can expell a Wife! *Exit.*

ACT II.

ACT II.

Enter Fossile *in a Footman's Cloaths.*

Fossile. A Special Dog: this Footman of my Wife's! as mercenary as the Porter of a First Minister! why should she place him as a Centinel at my Door? unquestionably, to carry on her intrigues. Why did I Bribe him to Lend me his Livery? to discover those intrigues. And now, O wretched *Fossile*, thou hast debas'd thyself into the low Character of a Footman. What then? Gods and Demi-gods have assum'd viler shapes: They, to make a Cuckold; I, to prove myself one. Why then should my Metamorphosis be more shameful, when my purpose is more honest?

[*Knocking at the Door, enter Footman.*]

Footman. Ay, this is her Livery. Friend, give this to your Mistress.

[*Gives a Letter to* Fossile *and Exit.*]

Fos-

Fossile [reads.] *Madam, You have filted me. What I gave you cost me dear; what you might have given me, would have cost you nothing. You shall use my next Present with more respect. I Presented you a fine Snuff-Box, you gave it to that Coxcomb* Underplot, *and* Underplot *gave it to my Wife. Judge of my Surprise.*

Freeman.

A fine circulation of a Snuff-Box! in time I shall have the rarest of my Shells set off with Gold Hinges, to make Presents to all the Fops about Town. My *Conchæ Veneris*; and perhaps, even my *Nautilus.*

A Knocking at the Door. Enter an Old Woman.

Old Woman. Can I speak with your good Mistress? Honest Friend,

Fossile. No, She's busy.

Old Woman. Madam *Wyburn* presents her Service and has sent this Letter. [*Exit.*

Fossile [reads.] *Being taken up with waiting upon Merchants Ladys this morning, I have sent to acquaint you my dear sweet Mrs.* Townley, *that the Alderman agrees to every*

every thing but putting away his Wife, which he ſays is not Decent at that end of the Town. He deſires a Meeting this Evening.

Poſtſcript.

He does not like the Grocer's Wife at all.

Bleſs me! what a libidinous Age we Live in! neither his own Wife! nor the Grocer's Wife! will People like Nobody's Wife but mine!

[*Knocking at the Door. Enter Footman, gives a Letter and* Exit.]

[*Enter another Footman, gives a Letter, and* Exit.]

Foſſile [reads.] *Sincerely Madam, I cannot ſpare that Summ; eſpecially in Monthly payments. My good Friend and Neighbour* Pinch, *a quiet, ſober Man, is content to go a third part, only for Leave to Viſit upon Sabbath days.*

Habakkuk Plumb.

Well, Frugality is laudable even in Iniquity! Now for this other.

Opens the Second Letter.

Foſſile

Foſſile [reads.] *Madam, I can't make you Rich, but I can make you Immortal.*

Verſes on Mrs. Suſanna Townley, *in the front Box dreſs'd in Green.*

In You the Beautys of the Spring are ſeen,
Your Cheeks are Roſes, and your Dreſs is Green.

A poor Dog of a Poet! I fear him not.

Enter a ragged Fellow with a Letter.

Footman. My Maſter is at preſent under a Cloud —— He begs you will deliver this Letter to your Lady. [*Exit.*

Foſſile [reads.] *I am reduced by your Favours to ask the thing I formerly deny'd; that you would entertain me as a Husband, who can no longer keep you as a Miſtreſs.*

Charles Bat.

Why did I part with this Fellow? This was a Propoſal indeed, to make both me and himſelf happy at once! He ſhall have her, and a Twelve-month's Fees into the Bargain. Where ſhall I find him? —Why was the Miſtreſs of all Mankind unknown to thee alone? Why is Nature ſo dark in our greateſt Concerns? Why are there no external Symptoms of Defloration, nor any Pathognotnick of the Loſs of Virginity but a big Belly? Why, has not Lewdneſs it's Tokens like the Plague? Why muſt a Man know

Rain

Rain by the aking of his Corns, and have no prognoſtick of what is of infinitely greater Moment, Cuckoldome? Or if there are any Marks of Chaſtity, why is the Enquiry allowed only to *Jews*, and deny'd to *Chriſtians?* O *Townly, Townly!* once to me the fragrant Roſe; now Aloes, Wormwood and Snake-root! but I muſt not be ſeen.

As Townly *and* Sarſenet *enter,* Foſſile *ſneaks off.*

Townly. *Sarſenet*, we are betray'd. I have diſcovered my Husband poſted at the Door in *Hugh*'s Livery, he has intercepted all my Letters. I immediately writ this, which is the only thing that can bring us off. Run this Moment to *Plotwell*, get him to copy it, and ſend it directed to me by his own Servant with the utmoſt Expedition. He is now at the Chocolate-Houſe in the next Street.

Sarſenet. I fly Madam; but how will you diſengage your ſelf from the Affair with *Underplot?*

Townley. Leave it to me. Though he wants Senſe, he's handſome, and I like the Fellow; and if he is lucky enough to come in my Husband's Abſence. ——— But prithee *Sarſenet* make haſte. [*Exit* Townly *and* Sarſenet, *upon which* Foſſile *re enters, to him* Under-plot.

Under-plot.

Underplot. Hearke'e, Friend. I never talk with one of your Coat, but I firſt tip him.

Foſſile. Behold the Lucre of a Pimp! between the Pox abroad, and my Plague at home, I find a Man may never want Fees. [*aſide.*] Your Honour's Commands, I pray. I long to ſerve you.

Underplot. Ah, Boy! thou haſt a rare Miſtreſs for Vails. Come, I know thou art a ſly Dog; Can'ſt thou introduce me to her for a Moment's Converſation?

Foſſile. Impoſſible.

Underplot. What, ſtill impoſſible?

[*Gives more Money.*

Foſſile. Still impoſſible.

Underplot. Poh, Pox. But prithee, Friend, by the by; is there any thing in this Report that ſhe is marry'd to the Doctor here?

Foſſile. I am afraid there is ſomething in it.

Underplot. What a Spirit does a Jealous Husband give to an Intrigue! Pray, is he not a moſt egregious ſilly Animal?

Foſſile. Not exceeding wiſe indeed.

Underplot. Rich?

Foſſile. He has Money.

Underplot. That will ſave the Expence of her Gallants. Old?

Foſſile. Ay, too old, Heaven knows.

Underplot. How came it into the Puppy's Head to marry?

Foſſile. By the Inſtigation of Satan.

Underplot. I'll help the old Fool to an Heir.

Foſſile. No doubt on't. If the whole Town can do it, he will not want one.

Underplot. Come, prithee deal freely with me. Has *Plotwell* been here ſince the Wedding?

Foſſile. He has! too ſure: [*aſide.*] He's a dangerous Rival to you; if you have a mind to ſucceed, keep a ſtrict Watch upon him, that he may not get admittance before you.

Underplot. Well. Since thou haſt ſhown thy ſelf ſo much my Friend, I'll let thee into a Secret. *Plotwell* and I no ſooner heard of the Wedding, but we made a Bett of a Hundred Gulneas, who ſhould dub the Doctor firſt. Remember, you go twenty Pieces with me.

Foſſile. But here is ſome Body coming. Away, you are ſure of my Intereſt. [*Exit Underplot.*

Foſſile. This was well judg'd. I have a ſmall Territory coveted by two rival Potentates. It is profound Policy to make them watch one the other, and ſo keep the Balance of Power in my own Hands. Certainly nothing ſo improves one's Politicks, as to have a Coquet to one's Wife.

Enter a Footman with a Letter.

Footman. This is for your Lady. Deliver it ſafe into her own Hands. [*Exit Footman.*

Foſſile reads.] *Know, cruel Woman, I have diſcover'd the Secret of your Marriage; you ſhall have all the Plague of a jealous Husband, without the Pleaſure of giving him Cauſe. I have this Morning counterfeited Billets-doux*

and

and Letters from Bawds; nay, I have ſent Pimps; ſome of which, I hope, are fallen into your old Coxcomb's Hands. If you deny me the Pleaſure of tipping him a real Cuckold, at leaſt I'll have the Reſentment to make him an imaginary one. Know, that this is not the hundredth part of the Revenge that ſhall be executed upon thee, by

R. Pl.

Townley. [*Peeping.*] So. The Letter works as I would have it. [*aſide.*

Foſſile. How true is that ſaying of the Philoſopher! *We only know, that we know nothing.* The Eruption of thoſe Horns which ſeem'd to make ſo ſtrong a puſh is now ſuppreſs'd. Is the Myſtery of all theſe Letters nothing but the Revenge of a diſappointed Lover? The Hand and Seal are juſt the ſame with the *Welchman's* that I intercepted a while ago. Truly, theſe *Welch* are a hot revengeful People. My Wife may be Virtuous; ſhe may not. Prevention is the ſafeſt Method with Diſeaſes and Intrigues. Women are wanton, Husbands weak, Bawds buſy, Opportunities dangerous, Gallants eager; therefore it behoves honeſt Men to be watchful. But here comes my Wife, I muſt hide my ſelf; for ſhould I be detected, ſhe might have a juſt Cauſe of complaint for my impertinent Curioſity.

[*Exit Foſſile.*

Enter Townley; *and to her* Sarſnet *at the other Door.*

Sarſnet. Your Orders, Madam, have been executed to a tittle, and I hope with Succeſs.

Townley. Extreamly well. Juſt as we could have wiſh'd. But I can't forgive that Raſcal *Hugh.* To turn him away would be dangerous. We will rather take the Advantage of the Confidence my Husband has in him. Leave the Husband to me, and do you Diſcipline the Footman. Such early Curioſity muſt be cruſh'd in the bud. *Hugh, Hugh, Hugh.* [*calls aloud, and rings*] What is become of the Rogue?

[Townley *runs in, and drags out* Foſſile *changing his Cloaths with* Hugh. Why Sirrah! muſt one call all Day for you?

[*Cuffs him.*

Sarſnet. A Rogue in Diſguiſe, got in to rob the Houſe! Thieves, Thieves.

Enter Clinket, Prue *with the writing Desk, and Servants.*

Foſſile. St. St— no Noiſe. Prithee, Dearee, look upon me. See, ſee, thy own dear Husband. It is I.

Townley. What an unfortunate Woman am I! Could not you paſs one Day without an Intrigue? and with a Cookwench too! for you could put on a Livery for no other end. You wicked Man.

Sarſnet.

Sarſnet. His Coldneſs, Madam, is now no longer a Myſtery. Filthy Monſter! wer't not thou provided with my Miſtreſs as a Remedy for thy rampant Unchaſtity?

Townley. Was all your Indifference to me for this! you Brute you. [*Weeps.*

Foſſile. Nay, Prithee, Dearee, judge not raſhly. My Character is eſtabliſh'd in the World. There lives not a more ſober, chaſt, and virtuous Perſon than Doctor *Foſſile.*

Townley. Then why this Diſguiſe?

Foſſile. Since it muſt come out; ha, ha, ha, only a frolick on my Wedding Day between *Hugh* and I. We had a mind to exhibit a little Mummery.

Clinket. What joy ariſes in my Soul! to ſee my Uncle in a Dramatick Character! ſince your Humour led you to the *Drama*, Uncle, why would you not conſult a relative Muſe in your own Family? I have always uſed you as my Phyſician; and why ſhould not you uſe me as your Poet?

Foſſile. Prithee, Dear, leave me a Moment. This is a Scandal to my Gravity. I'll be with you, as my ſelf, immediately.

[*Exeunt omnes, except* Foſſile *and* Hugh.

As they are changing Habits, Foſſile *ſays,* As a mark of my Confidence in thee, I leave thee Guardian of my Houſe while I go my rounds. Let none in but Patients; wan, ſickly Fellows, no Perſon in the leaſt degree of bodily Strength.

Hugh. Worthy Doctor, You may rely upon my Honour. [*Exit* Fossile.
I have betray'd my Mistress. My Conscience flies in my Face, and I can ease it no way but by betraying my Master.

[*Knocking at the Door.*

This is not the Doctor; but he is dress'd like him, and that shall be my Excuse.

[*He lets* Plotwell *in,* Townley *meets him, they Embrace.*

Townley. Hugh, Go, wait at the Door.

[*Exit* Hugh.

Plotwell. This Disguise gives Spirit to my Intrigue. Certainly I am the first Person that ever enjoy'd a Bride without the scandal of Matrimony.

Townley. I have a different relish, Mr. *Plotwell,* for now I can't abide you, you are so like my Husband.

Plotwell. Underplot, I defy thee. I have laid the Wager, and now I hold the Stakes.

Townley. Opportunity, Mr. *Plotwell,* has been the downfall of much Virtue.

[*As he is leading her off, enter* Hugh.

Hugh. Ah Madam! the Doctor! the Doctor!

[*Exit* Hugh.

Plotwell. Fear nothing. I'll stand it. I have my Part ready. [*Exit* Townley.

Enter

Enter Foſſile.

Foſſile. I promis'd Lady *Longfort* my Eagle-ſtone. The poor Lady is like to miſcarry, and 'tis well I thought on't. Hah! who is here! I do not like the Aſpect of the Fellow. But I will not be over cenſorious.

[*They make many bows and cringes in advancing to each other.*

Plotwell. Illuſtriſſime Domine, huc adveni ——

Foſſile. Illuſtriſſime Domine —— *non uſus ſum loquere Latinam* —— If you cannot ſpeak *Engliſh*, we can have no lingual Converſation.

Plotwell. I can ſpeak a little *Engliſe.* I have great deal heard of de Fame of de great Luminary of all Arts and Sciences, de illuſtrious Doctor *Foſſile.* I would make commutation (what do you call it) I would exchange ſome of my tings for ſome of his tings.

Foſſile. Pray, Sir, what Univerſity are you of?

Plotwell. De famous Univerſity of *Cracow* in *Polonia minor.* I have cur'd de King of *Sweden* of de Wound. My Name be Doctor *Cornelius Lubomirski.*

Foſſile. Your *Lubomirskis* are a great Family. But what *Arcana* are you Maſter of? Sir.

Plotwell. [*Shows a large Snuff-box.*] See dere, Sir, dat Box de Snuff.

Fossile. Snuff-box.

Plotwell. Right. Snuff-box. Dat be de very true Gold.

Fossile. What of that?

Plotwell. Vat of dat? me make dat Gold my own self, of de Lead of de great Church of *Cracow.*

Fossile. By what Operations?

Plotwell. By Calcination; Reverberation; Purification; Sublimation; Amalgumation; Precipitation; Volitilization.

Fossile. Haye a care what you assert. The Volitilization of Gold is not an obvious Process. It is by great elegance of Speech called, *fortitudo fortitudinis fortissima.*

Plotwell. I need not acquaint de illustrious Doctor *Fossile*, dat all de Metals be but unripe Gold.

Fossile. Spoken like a Philosopher. And therefore there should be an Act of Parliament against digging of Lead Mines, as against felling young Timber. But inform me, Sir, what might be your *menstruum*, Snow-water, or May-dew?

Plotwell. Snow-Vater.

Fossile. Right. Snow is the universal Pickle of Nature for the preservation of her Productions in the hyemal Season.

Plotwell. If you will go your self, and not trust de Servant, to fetch some of de right *Thames* Sand dat be below de Bridge, I will

show

ſhow you de naked *Diana* in your Study, before I go hence.

Foſſile. Perhaps you might. I am not at preſent diſpos'd for Experiments.

Plotwell. This Bite wont take to ſend him out of the Way, I'll change my Subject. [*aſide.*] Do you deal in Longitudes, Sir?

Foſſile. I deal not in impoſſibilities. I ſearch only for the grand Elixir.

Plotwell. Vat do you tink of de new Metode of Fluxion?

Foſſile. I know no other but by *Mercury.*

Plotwell. Ha, ha. Me mean de Fluxion of de Quantity.

Foſſile. The greateſt Quantity I ever knew, was three Quarts a Day.

Plotwell. Be dere any ſecret in the Hydrology, Zoology, Minerology, Hydraulicks, Acauſticks, Pneumaticks, Logarithmatechny, dat you do want de Explanation of?

Foſſile. This is all out of my Way. Do you know of any Hermaphrodites, monſtrous Twins, Antidiluvian Shells, Bones, and Vegetables?

Plotwell. Vat tink you of an Antidiluvian Knife, Spoon, and Fork, with the Mark of *Tubal Cain* in *Hebrew*, dug out of de Mine of *Babylon*?

Foſſile. Of what Dimenſions, I pray, Sir?

Plotwell. De Spoon be bigger dan de modern Ladle; de Fork, like de great Fire-fork; and de Knife, like de Cleaver.

Foſſile.

Fossile. Bless me! this shows the Stature and Magnitude of those Antidiluvians!

Plotwell. To make you convinc'd that I tell not de lie, dey are in de *Turkey* Ship at *Kapping*, just going to be dispos'd of. Me would go there vid you, but de Business vil not let me.

Fossile. An extraordinary Man this! I'll examine him further. [*Aside.*] How could your Country lose so great a Man as you?

Plotwell. Dat be de Secret. But because me vil have de fair Correspondence with de illustrious Doctor *Fossile*, me vil not deny dat *Orpheus* and me had near run de same Fate, for different Reason. I was hunted out of my Country by de general Insurrection of de Women.

Fossile. How so pray?

Plotwell. Because me have prepare a certain Liquor which discover whether a Woman be a Virgin or no.

Fossile. A curious Discovery! have you any of it still?

Plotwell. Dere it is, Sir. It be commonly called de *Lapis Lydius Virginitatis*, or Touch-stone of Virginity. [*Gives him a Vial.*

Fossile. It has the smell of your common Hart's-horn. But all your Volatile Spirits have a near resemblance.

Plotwell. Right, Sir. De Distillation be made from the *Hippomanes* of a young Mare. When a deflower'd Virgin take ten Drops, she will Faint

Faint and Sneeze, and de large red Spot will appear upon de Cheek; which me call de ſpot of Infamy. All de young Bridegroom make de experiment. De Archbiſhop did make Obligation to de Nun to take it every ninth Month. And I fly for the hurlyburly it make.

Enter Hugh.

Hugh. Sir, here is a Patient in a Chair.

Foſſile. Doctor *Lubomirski*, let me conduct you into my Study, where we will farther diſcuſs the wonderful Virtues of this Liquor. Tell the Patient I will attend him this Inſtant. [*Exeunt* Plotwell *and* Foſſile.

Enter Underplot *in a Chair like a ſick Man.*

Hugh. The Doctor will wait upon you immediately. [*Exit* Hugh.

Underplot. I dogg'd *Plotwell* to this Door in a Doctor's Habit. If he has admittance as a Doctor, why not I as a Patient? Now for a lucky Deciſion of our Wager! If I can't ſucceed myſelf, I will at leaſt ſpoil his Intrigue.

Enter Foſſile.

Underplot. Ah! ah! have you no Place. Ah! where can I repoſe a little? I was taken ſuddenly. Ah!

Ah! ah! 'tis happy I was near the Houſe of an eminent Phyſician.

Foſſile. Reſt your ſelf upon that Couch.

Underplot. If I lay a few Minutes cover'd up warm in a Bed, I believe I might recover.

[Foſſile *feels his Pulſe.* Plotwell *peeps.*

Plotwell. *Underplot* in diſguiſe! I'll be his Doctor, and cure him of theſe Frolicks. [*aſide.*

Foſſile. What are your Symptoms, Sir? a very tempeſtuous Pulſe, I profeſs!

Underplot. Violent Head-ach, ah! ah!

Foſſile. All this proceeds from the Fumes of the Kitchen, the Stomachick Digeſter wants reparation for the better Concoction of your Aliment: But, Sir, is your Pain pungitive, tenſive, gravitive, or pulſatory?

Underplot. All together, ah!

Foſſile. Impoſſible Sir, but I have an eminent Phyſician now in the Houſe, he ſhall conſult. Doctor *Lubomirſki*, here is a Perſon in a moſt violent *Cephalalgy*, a terrible Caſe!

Enter Plotwell.

Foſſile. Feel his Pulſe. [Plotwell *feels it.*] You feel it Sir, ſtrong, hard and labouring.

Plotwell. Great Plenitude, Sir,

Foſſile. Feel his Belly, Sir; a great Tenſion and Heat of the Abdomen—A hearty Man, his Muſcles are toroſe; how ſoon are the ſtrongeſt

humbled

humbled by Diſeaſes! Let us retire, and conſult.

Enter Sarſnet *in haſt.*

Sarſnet. My Miſtreſs approves your deſign, bear it out bravely, perhaps I ſhall have a ſudden opportunity of conveying you into her Bedchamber, counterfeit a fainting Fit, and rely upon me. [*Exit.*

Underplot. As yet I find I am undiſcover'd by *Plotwell*; neither is his Intrigue in ſuch forwardneſs as mine, though he made a fair puſh for it before me. [*aſide.*

[Foſſile *and* Plotwell *come forward.*

Foſſile. I am entirely for a Gliſter.

Plotwell. My Opinion is for de ſtrong Vomit.

Foſſile. Bleed him.

Plotwell. Make de Scarrification, give me de Lancet, me will do it myſelf, and after dat will put de Bliſter to de Sole of de Feet.

Foſſile. Your dolor proceeds from a frigid *intemperies* of the Brain, a ſtrong Diſeaſe! the Enemy has invaded the very Citadel of your Microcoſm, the Magazine of your vital Functions; he has ſate down before it; yet there ſeems to be a good Garriſon of vital Spirits, and we don't queſtion to be able to defend it.

Plotwell.

Plotwell. Ve will cannonade de Enemy wid Pills, bombard him wid de Bolus, blow him up with Volatiles, fill up de Trenches wid de large Inundation of Apozems, and diſlodge him wid de Stink-pot; let de Apothecary bring up de Artillery of Medicine immediately.

Foſſile. True, we might unload the Stomach by gentle Emeticks, and the Inteſtines by Clyſters ſtimulative, carminative, and emollient, with ſtrong Hydroticks, quiet the ſpaſms of the Viſcera by Paregoricks, draw off the ſtagnant Blood by deep Scarrifications, and depurate its Fæculencies by Volatiles; after this, let there be numerous Bliſters and potential Cauteries--- I conſult my Patient's eaſe; I am againſt much Phyſick--- he Faints, he is Apoplectick, bleed him this Moment.

Plotwell. Hoy, de Servant dere, make haſt, bring de Pan of hot Coals; or de red hot Iron to make application to de Temples.

Enter Hugh.

Hugh. Here's the Poker red hot from the Fire.

Plotwell. Very vell, make de burn dere, exactly dere. [*putting the Poker near his Head.*

Underplot. Hold, hold, am I to be murder'd? [*ſtarts up.*] I know you, *Plotwell*, and was I not oblig'd by Honour and Friendſhip, I'd expoſe you to the Doctor. [*aſide to* Plotwell.

Plotwell.

Plotwell. Very Lunatick, Mad, fetch de Cord to make de tie upon de Leg and de Arm, take off thirty Ounces of Blood, and den plunge him into de cold Bath.

Foſſile. Your Judgment, Doctor *Lubomirski*, is excellent, I will call my Servants to aſſiſt us.

Underplot. Hearke e, old Put; I came to take your Advice, and not that *French* Son of a Whore's Scarrifications, and ſo plague take you both. [*Ex.* Underplot *and* Hugh.

Foſſile. Doctor *Lubomirski*, this Vial that you have intruſted in my cuſtody, ſhall be with Acknowledgement return'd after a few Experiments, I muſt crave your indulgence, Diſeaſes, you know, Sir, are impertinent, and will tie themſelves to no Hours, poor Lady *Hyppokekyana*!

Plotwell. Ah Sir! I beg your pardon, if you make viſit to de Patient, me will divert myſelf in your Study till you make return.

Foſſile. That cannot be, I have a Lady juſt coming to conſult me in a caſe of Secrecy.

Plotwell. Have you not de Wife? Me will make Converſation wid de Ladies till you come.

Foſſile. They ſee no Company in the Morning, they are all in *deſhabilleè*; moſt learned Doctor *Lubomirski*, your humble Servant.

Plotwell. Moſt illuſtrious Doctor *Foſſile*, me be, with de profoundeſt Adoration.

Foſſile. With the greateſt Admiration

Plotwell. Your moſt humble

Foſſile. Moſt obedient Servant.

Plotwell. Ah, Monſieur, point de Ceremonie.

[*Exit* Plotwell.

Foſſile. Hugh. [*Enter Hugh.*] bring me a Pint of Sack; let your Miſtreſs know I want to ſee her. Take care that her Orders be obey'd, and that her Trunks and Boxes be immediately brought hither. *Sarſnet* will give you Directions.

[*Exit* Hugh. Foſſile *ſits down on a Couch.* Ah *Foſſile!* if the Cares of two Hours of a married Life have ſo reduc'd thee, how long can'ſt thou hold out! To watch a Wife all Day, and have her wake thee all Night! 'twill never do. The Fatigue of three Feavers, ſix Small-poxes, and five Great ones, is nothing to that of one Wife. Now for my Touchſtone; I will try it upon her preſently. If ſhe bear it to-day—I am afraid ſhe will bear it to-morrow too.

Enter Hugh *with a Bottle of Sack, and after him* Townley. Hugh *gives the Bottle and Glaſs to* Foſſile, *and exit.*

Sit down by me, my Dear, I was going to refreſh my ſelf with a Glaſs of Canary. You look pale. It will do you good.

Townley.

Townley. Faugh. Wine in the Morning!

[Foſſile *Drinks, and fills again, and drops ſome of the Liquor into the Glaſs;*

What is the Meaning of this? Am I to be Poyſon'd! [*Aſide.*

Foſſile. You muſt drink it. Sack is Sacred to *Hymen*; of it is made the Nuptial Poſſet.

Townley. Don't preſs me, Mr. *Foſſile*, I nauſeate it. It ſmells ſtrangely. There is ſomething in it.

Foſſile. An ill Symptom! She can't bear the Smell. [*Aſide.*] Pray, my Dear, oblige me.

Townley. I'm for none of your Slops. I'll fill my ſelf.

Foſſile. I muſt own, I have put ſome reſtorative Drops in it, which are excellent. I may drink it ſafely. [*Aſide.*] [*Drinks.*] The next Glaſs I prepare for you.

[*Fills, and pours ſome Drops in.*

[Townley *Drinks.* Foſſile *runs behind to Support her; then pores upon her Cheek, and touches it with his Finger.*

Townley. Your Inſolence is inſupportable. 'Twas but this Moment you ſuſpected my Virtue; and now my Complexion. Put on your Spectacles. No Red was ever laid upon theſe Cheeks. I'll fly thee, and die a Maid, rather than live under the ſame Roof with Jealouſy and Caprice.

Foſſile. O thou ſpotleſs Innocence! I cannot refrain Tears of Joy. Forgive me, and I'll tell thee all. Theſe Drops have been a Secret in our Family for many Years. They are call'd the *Touchſtone of Virginity.* The Males adminiſter it to the Brides on their Wedding-Day; and by its Virtue have aſcertain'd the Honour of the *Foſſiles* from Generation to Generation. There are Family Cuſtoms, which it is almoſt impious to neglect.

Townley. Had you married a Perſon of doubtful Reputation———, But me, Mr. *Foſſile!*

Foſſile. I did not indeed ſuſpect thee. But my Mother obliged me to this Experiment with her dying Words —— My Wife is chaſte: And to preſerve her ſo, 'tis neceſſary that I have none but chaſte Servants about her. I'll make the Experiment on all my Female Domeſticks. [*Aſide.*] I will now, my Dear, in thy Preſence, put all my Family to the Trial. Here! bid my Niece, and all the Maid-Servants come before me. [*Calling out.*

[*Enter* Clinket, Prue, *and Servants.*]

Give Ear, all ye Virgins: We make Proclamation in the Name of the Chaſte *Diana*, being reſolv'd to make a Solemn Eſſay of the Virtue, Virginity, and Chaſtity of all within our Walls. We therefore Adviſe, Warn and Precaution all Spinſters, who know themſelves Blemiſh'd, not on any Pretence whatſoever to Taſte theſe our

Drops, which will manifeſt their Shame to the World by viſible Tokens.

Clinket. I abominate all Kind of Drops. They interrupt the Series of Idea's. But have they any Power over the Virgin's Dreams, Thoughts, and private Meditations?

Foſſile. No. They do not affect the *motus Primo-primi*, or Intentions; only Actualities, Niece.

Clinket. Then give it me. I can drink as freely of it, as of the Waters of *Helicon*. My Love was always *Platonick*. [*Drinks.*

Foſſile. Yet I have known a *Platonick* Lady lodge at a Midwife's.

[Foſſile *offers it round.*]

Firſt Woman. I never take Phyſick.

Foſſile. That's one. Stand there. My Niece profeſſes her ſelf a *Platonick*. You are rather a *Carteſian*.

Clinket. Ah dear Uncle! How do the *Platonicks* and *Carteſians* differ?

Foſſile. The *Platonicks* are for Idea's, the *Carteſians* for Matter and Motion.

Townley. Mr. *Foſſile*, you are too ſevere.

Second Woman. I am not a-dry. [*Curtſies.*

Foſſile. There's Two. Stand there.

Prue. My Miſtreſs can Anſwer for me. She has taken it.

Foſſile. She has. But however ſtand there, among the *Carteſians*.

Third Woman. My Innocence would protect me, though I trod over red-hot Iron. Give me a Brimmer.

[*She takes a Mouthful, and ſpits it out again.*]

Foſſile. 'Twas a preſumptuous Thing to Gargle with it: But however, Madam, if you pleaſe ——walk among the *Carteſians.*

[*Two young Wenches run away.*

Clinket. Prue, follow me. I have juſt found a Rhime for my *Pindarick.*

[*They all ſneak off.*

Foſſile. All gone! What no more Ladies here? No more Ladies! [*looking to the Audience,*] O that I had but a Boarding-School, or a Middle-Gallery!

Enter Sarſnet, *follow'd by Two Porters bearing a Cheſt.*

Set down the Things here: There is no Occaſion for carrying them up Stairs, ſince they are to be ſent into the Countrey to-Morrow.

[*Ex. Porters.*

What have I done? My Marriage, theſe confounded Whimſies, and Doctor *Lubomirſki*, have made me quite forget poor Lady *Hippokekoana.* She was in Convulſions, and I am afraid dead by this Time. [*Exit* Foſſile.

Sarſnet. I have brought you a Preſent, Madam, make good Uſe of it. So I leave you together.

[*Exit* Sarſnet.

[Townley *opens the Cheſt:* Plotwell, *who was cover'd with a Gown and Petticoat, gets out.*

Townley. Never was any Thing ſo lucky. The Doctor is juſt this Minute gone to a Patient.

Plotwell. I tempt Dangers enough in your Service. I am almoſt crippled in this Cheſt-Adventure. Oh my Knees! Prithee, my Dear, lead me to a Bed where I may ſtretch my ſelf out. [*Leading her off.*

Enter Sarſnet.

Sarſnet. Oh Madam! yonder is the Doctor in deep Diſcourſe with *Underplot:* I fear he has dogg'd me, and betray'd us. They are both coming back together. [*Exit* Sarſnet.

Plotwell. I'll ſhrink ſnug into my Shell again.

Townley. That he may directly pop upon you. The Trunk will be the firſt Place he will examine. Have you no Preſence of Mind? You fit for an Intrigue!

Plotwell. What ſhall I do?

Townley. Fear not, you ſhall be Inviſible on this very Spot.

Plotwell. What do you mean? He's juſt at the Door. You intend to diſcover me.

Townley. Miſtruſt me not: You ſhall walk out before his Face at that very Door, though he

bring in a Hundred Spies, and not one of them ſhall perceive you.

Plotwell. Don't trifle. Are you Mad? [*Knocking at the Door.*] Nay, now 'tis too late.

Townley. Arm thy ſelf with Flounces, and fortify thy ſelf with Whalebone; enter beneath the *Cupolo* of this Petticoat.

Plotwell. The beſt Security in the World! an Old Fellow has ſeldom any Thing to do beneath that Circumference.

Townley. No more. But under it immediately.

[Plotwell *gets under it.*

Thus *Venus*, when approaching Foes aſſail,
Shields her *Æneas* with a Silken Veil,

Enter Foſſile.

Townley. O my Dear, you come opportunely. How do you like my Fancy in this new Petticoat? There is ſomething in it ſo odd!

Foſſile. You have another in your Cheſt much odder. I want to ſee that.

Townley. How jaunty the Flounces!

Foſſile. Ay, 'tis plain ſhe would lure me from the Cheſt; there I ſhall find him. [*Aſide.*

Townley. The Lace! the Fringe!

Foſſile. All this is nothing to the embroider'd Sattin. Prithee, my Dear, give me the Key.

Townley.

Townley. Sure never was any Thing ſo prettily diſpoſed. Obſerve but the Air of it: So *Dégageé!* But the Lining is ſo charming.

[*She walks to the Door, and* Foſſile *to the Trunk.* Plotwell *kiſſes her out of the top of the Petticoat, and then goes off.*]

[*As* Foſſile *is cautiouſly opening the Trunk with his Sword drawn,* Townley *comes up to him.*]

What more of your Frolicks, Mr. *Foſſile?* What Time of the Moon is this?

Foſſile. This *Underplot* is a confounded Villain, he would make me jealous of an honeſt civil Gentleman, only for an Opportunity to Cuckold me himſelf. [*Aſide.*] Come, my Dear, forget all that is paſt. I know —— I have prov'd thee Virtuous. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Enter Foſſile *with a Vial in his Hand.*

Foſſile. THIS is all we have for the flying Dragon ſo celebrated by Antiquity. A cheap Purchaſe! It coſt me but Fifteen Guineas. But the *Jew* made it up in the Butterfly and the Spider.

Enter Two Porters bearing a Mummy.

Oh! here's my Mummy. Set him down. I am in Haſte. Tell Captain *Bantam*, I'll talk with him at the Coffee-Houſe. [*Ex. Porters.*

Enter Two Porters bearing an Alligator.

A moſt ſtupendous Animal! ſet him down. [*Ex. Porters.*

Poor Lady *Hippokekoana*'s Convulſions! I believe there is a Fatality in it, that I can never get to her. Who can I truſt my Houſe to in my Abſence? Were my Wife as Chaſte as *Lucretia*, who knows what an unlucky Minute may bring forth! In Cuckoldom, the Art of Attack is prodigiouſly improved beyond the Art of Defence. So far it is manifeſt, *Underplot* has a Deſign upon my

my Honour. For the Eaſe of my Mind, I will lock up my Wife in this my *Muſæum*, 'till my Return.

Enter Townley.

You will find ſomething here, my Dear, to divert your ſelf.

Townley. I hate the Sight of theſe ſtrange Creatures; but ſince I am Mr. *Foſſile*'s Wife, I ſhall endeavour to conquer my Averſion.

Foſſile. Thou may'ſt ſafely be here to Day, my Dear; to Morrow thou ſhould'ſt no more enter this Room than a *Peſt-houſe*. 'Tis dangerous for Women that are Impregnated. But poor Lady *Hippokekoana* ſuffers all this whi—.

[*Ex.* Foſſile *with a Key in his Hand.*

Townley. Since he has lock'd me in, to be even with him, I'll bolt him out.

[Plotwell, *dreſs'd like a* Mummy, *comes forward.*

Plot. Thus trav'ling far from his *Egyptian* Tomb,
Thy *Antony* ſalutes his *Cleopatra.*

Townley. Thus *Cleopatra*, in deſiring Arms,
Receives her *Antony*——. But prithee dear pickled *Hieroglyphick*, who ſo ſuddenly could aſſiſt thee with this Shape?

Plotwell. The Play-houſe can dreſs Mummies, Bears, Lions, Crocodiles, and all the Monſters of *Lybia*. My Arms, Madam, are ready to break their Paſt-board Priſon to embrace you.

Townley.

Townly. Not ſo haſty. Stay till the jealous Fool is out of Sight.

Plotw. Our ill Stars, and the Devil, have brought him back ſo often ——

Townley. He can never parry this Blow, nor grow jealous of his *Mummy*. A *Mummy* is his intimate Friend.

Plotw. And a Man cannot eaſily be Cuckolded by any Body elſe.

Townley. Here may'ſt thou remain the Ornament of his Study, and the Support of his Old Age. Thou ſhalt divert his Company, and be a Father to his Children. I will bring thee Legs of Pullets, Remnants of Tarts, and Fragments of Diſſerts. Thou ſhalt be fed like *Bell* and the *Dragon*.

Plotw. But Madam; before you entertain me as your Mummy in Ordinary, you ought to be acquainted with my Abilities to diſcharge that Office. Let me ſlip off this Habit of Death, you ſhall find I have ſome Symptoms of Life. -- Thus *Jove* within the Milk-white Swan compreſs'd his *Leda*.

[Underplot *in the* Alligator *crawls forward, then riſes up and embraces her.*]

Underp. Thus *Jove* within the *Serpent*'s ſcaly Folds,
Twin'd round the *Macedonian* Queen.

Townley. Ah! [*Shrieks.*

Plotw.

Plotw. Fear not, Madam. This is my evil Genius *Underplot* that ſtill haunts me. How the Devil got you here?

Underp. Why ſhould not the Play-houſe lend me a *Crocodile* as well as you a *Mummy*?

Townley. How unlucky is this! [*Aſide.*] Nay, I don't know but I may have Twenty Lovers in this Collection. You Snakes, Sharks, Monkeys, and Mantegers, ſpeak, and put in your Claim before it is too late.

Underp. Mr. *Mummy*, your Humble Servant; the Lady is pre-engag'd.

Plotw. Pray, Mr. *Crocodile*, let the Lady make her own Choice.

Underp. *Crocodile* as I am, I muſt be treated with common Humanity. You can't, Madam, diſown the Meſſage you ſent me.

Townley. Well! Ye Pair of *Egyptian* Lovers, agree this Matter between you, and I will acquit my ſelf like a Perſon of Honour to you both.

Plotw. Madam! If I don't love you above all your Sex, may I be baniſh'd the Studies of Virtuoſo's; and ſmoak'd like *Dutch* Beef in a Chimney ——

Underp. If I don't love you more than that Stale Mummy, may I never more be proclaim'd at a Show of Monſters, by the Sound of a Glaſs-Trumpet.

Plotw. May I be ſent to *'Pothecary's-Hall*, and beat up into *Venice-Treacle* for the Fleet and the Army, if this Heart ——

Underp.

Underp. May I be ſtuff'd with Straw, and given to a Mountebank, if this Soul ——

Plotw. Madam, I am a Human Creature. Taſte my Balſamick Kiſs.

Underp. A Lover in Swadling-Clouts! What is his Kiſs, to my Embrace?

Plotw. Look upon me, Madam. See how I am embroider'd with Hieroglyphicks.

Underp. Conſider my beautiful Row of Teeth.

Plotw. My Balmy Breath.

Underp. The ſtrong Joints of my Back.

Plotw. My erect Stature.

Underp. My long Tail.

Townley. Such a Conteſt of Beauty! How ſhall I decide it?

Plotw. Take me out of my Shell, Madam, and I'll make you a Preſent of the Kernel.

Underp. Then I muſt be upon a Level with him, and be uncrocodil'd.

Townley. Keep both of you your Shapes, and we are in no Fear of a Surprize from the Doctor: If you uncaſe, his Preſence would undo us. Sure never was any Thing ſo unlucky — I hear his Footſteps; quick to your Poſts. ——

[Mummy *and* Crocodile *run to their Places.*

[*Enter* Foſſile, *Dr.* Nautilus, *and Dr.* Poſſum.]

Naut. Much Joy to the Learned Dr. *Foſſile.* To have a *Mummy*, an *Alligator*, and a *Wife*, all in one Day, is too great Happineſs for Mortal Man!

Poſſum.

Poſſum. This an *Alligator!* Alack a Day, Brother *Nautilus*, this is a meer Lizard, an Eft, a Shrimp to mine.

Naut. How improving would it be to the Female Underſtanding, if the Cloſets of the Ladies were Furniſh'd, or, as I may ſay, Ornamented and Embelliſh'd with preſerv'd Butterflies, and beautiful Shells, inſtead of *China* Jars, and abſurd *Indian* Pictures.

Townley. Now for a Stratagem to bring off my unſucceſsful Pair of Gallants. [*Aſide.*

[*Exit* Townley.

Foſſile. Ah, Dr. *Nautilus*, how have I languiſh'd for your Feather of the Bird *Porphyrion*!

Nautilus. But your Dart of the *Mantichora*!

Foſſile. Your Haft of an Antediluvian Trowel, unqueſtionably the Tool of one of the *Babel* Maſons!

Nautilus. What's that to your Fragment of *Seth*'s Pillar?

Poſſum. Gentlemen. I affirm I have a greater Curioſity than all of them. I have an entire Leaf of *Noah*'s Journal aboard the Ark, that was hewn out of a Porphyry Pillar in *Palmyra.*

[Foſſile *opens the Caſe of the* Mummy.]

Nautil. By the Formation of the Muſcular Parts of the Viſage, I conjecture that this Mummy is Male.

Poſſum. Male, Brother! I am ſorry to obſerve your Ignorance of the Symetry of a Human Body. Do but obſerve the Projection of the Hip; beſides, the Bloom upon the Face; 'tis a Female beyond all Contradiction. *Foſſile.*

Foſſile. Let us have no raſh Diſpute, Brothers; but proceed methodically —— Behold the Vanity of Mankind! [*pointing to the* Mummy.] Some *Ptolemy* perhaps! ——

Naut. Who by his Pyramid and Pickle thought to ſecure to himſelf Death Immortal.

Foſſile. His Pyramid, alas! is now but a Wainſcot Caſe.

Poſſum. And his Pickle can ſcarce raiſe him to the Dignity of a Collar of Brawn.

Foſſile. Pardon me, Dr. *Poſſum*: The *Muſæum* of the Curious is a laſting Monument. And I think it no Degradation to a dead Perſon of Quality, to bear the Rank of an Anatomy in the Learned World.

Naut. By your Favour, Dr. *Poſſum*, a Collar of Brawn! I affirm, he is better to be taken inwardly than a Collar of Brawn.

Foſſile. An Excellent Medicine! He is hot in the firſt Degree, and exceeding powerful in ſome Diſeaſes of Women.

Naut. Right, Dr. *Foſſile*; for your *Aſphaltion.*

Poſſum. Pice-Aſphaltus, by your leave.

Naut. By your leave, Doctor *Poſſum*, I ſay *Aſphaltion.*

Poſſum. And I poſitively ſay, *Pice Aſphaltus.*

Naut. If you had read *Dioſcorides* or *Pliny* ——

Poſſum. I have read *Dioſcorides.* And I do affirm *Pice-Alſphaltus.*

Foſſile. Be calm, Gentlemen. Both of you handle this Argument with great Learning, Judgment and Perſpicuity. For the preſent, I beſeech you

you to Concord, and turn your Speculations on my *Alligator.*

Poſſum. The Skin is impenetrable even to a Sword.

Naut. Dr. *Poſſum,* I will ſhow you the contrary. [*Draws his Sword.*

Poſſum. In the mean time I will try the Mummy with this Knife, on the Point of which you ſhall ſmell the Pitch, and be convinc'd that it is the *Pice-Aſphaltus.* [*Takes up a Ruſty Knife.*

Foſſile. Hold, Sir: You will not only deface my Mummy, but ſpoil my *Roman* Sacrificing Knife.

Enter Townley.

Townley. I muſt lure them from this Experiment, or we are diſcover'd. [*Aſide.*

[*She looks through a Teleſcope.*

What do I ſee! Moſt prodigious! A Star as broad as the Moon in the Day-time!

[*The Doctors go to her.*

Poſſum. Only a *Halo* about the Sun, I ſuppoſe.

Naut. Your Suppoſitions, Doctor, ſeem to be groundleſs. Let me make my Obſervation.

[Naut. *and* Poſſum *ſtruggle to look firſt.*

Townley. Now for your Eſcape:

[*To* Plotwell *and* Underplot.

[*They run to the Door, but find it lock'd.*]

Underp. What an unlucky Dog I am!

Townley.

Townly. Quick. Back to your Posts. Don't move, and rely upon me. I have still another Artifice.

[*They run back to their Places.*

[*Exit* Townley.

Naut. I can espy no Celestial Body but the Sun.

Possum. Brother *Nautilus*, your Eyes are somewhat dim; your Sight is not fit for *Astronomical Observations.*

Fossile. Is the Focus of the Glass right? Hold Gentlemen, I see it; about the Bigness of *Jupiter.*

Naut. No Phenomenon offers it self to my Speculation.

Possum. Point over yonder Chimney. Directly *South.*

Naut. Thitherward, begging your Pardon, Dr. *Possum*, I affirm to be the *North.*

Fossile. East.

Possum. South.

Naut. North. Alas! What an ignorant Thing is Vanity! I was just making a Reflection on the Ignorance of my Brother *Possum*, in the Nature of the *Crocodile.*

Poss. First, Brother *Nautilus*, convince your self of the Composition of the *Mummy.*

Naut. I will insure your *Alligator* from any Damage. His Skin I affirm once more to be impenetrable. [*Draws his Sword.*

Possum.

Poſſum. I will not deface any Hieroglyphick.
[*Goes to the* Mummy *with the Knife.*]

Foſſile. I never oppoſe a luciferous Experiment. It is the beaten Highway to Truth.

[Plotwell *and* Underplot *leap from their Places; the Doctors are frighted.*]

Poſſ. Speak, I conjure thee. Art thou the Ghoſt of ſome murder'd *Egyptian* Monarch?

Naut. A rational Queſtion to a *Mummy*! But this Monſter can be no leſs than the Devil himſelf, for *Crocodiles* don't walk.

Enter Townley *and* Clinket.

[Townley *whiſpers* Clinket.

Foſſile. Gentlemen, wonder at Nothing within theſe Walls; for ever ſince I was Married, Nothing has happen'd to me in the common Courſe of Human Life.

Clinket. Madam, without a Compliment, you have a fine Imagination. The Maſquerade of the *Mummy* and *Crocodile* is extreamly juſt; I would not rob you of the Merit of the Invention, Yet ſince you make me the Compliment, I ſhall be proud to take the whole Contrivance of this Maſquerade upon my ſelf. [*To* Townley.] Sir be acquainted with my Maſqueraders. [*To* Foſſile.

Foſſile. Thou Female Imp of *Apollo*, more miſchievous than *Circe*, who fed Gentlemen of the Army in a *Hog's-Stye!* What mean you by theſe

Gambols? This *Mummy*, this *Crocodile*?

Clink. Only a little Mummery, Uncle.

Foſſile. What an outragious Conceit is this! Had you contented your ſelf with the *Metamorphoſis* of *Jupiter*, our Skill in the Claſſicks might have prevented our Terror.

Clink. I glory in the Fertility of my Invention the more, that it is beyond the Imagination of a Pagan Deity. Beſides, it is form'd upon the *Vray-Semblance*; for I knew you had a *Mummy* and a *Crocodile* to be brought home.

Foſſile. Dr. *Nautilus* is an infirm tender Gentleman; I wiſh the ſudden Concuſſion of his Animal Spirits may not kindle him into a Fever. I my ſelf, I muſt confeſs, have an extreme Palpitation.

Clink. Dear Uncle, be pacified. We are both of us the Votaries of our great Maſter *Apollo*. To you he has aſſigned the Art of Healing: Me he has taught to Sing; Why then ſhould we jangle in our Kindred Faculties?

Foſſile. *Apollo*, for ought I know, may be a very fine Perſon; but this I am ſure of, that the Skill he has given all his Phyſicians is not ſufficient to cure the Madneſs of his Poets.

Poſſum. Hark ye, Brother *Foſſile*! Your *Crocodile* has proved a Human Creature, I wiſh your Wife may not prove a *Crocodile*.

Naut. Hark ye, Brother *Foſſile*! Your *Mummy*, as you were ſaying, ſeemeth to be hot in the firſt Degree,

Degree, and is powerful in ſome Diſeaſes of Women. [*Exit* Nautilus *and* Poſſum.

Foſſ. You Diabolical Performers of my Niece's *Maſquerade*, will it pleaſe you to follow thoſe Gentlemen?

Clink. Nay, Sir, you ſhall ſee them Dance firſt.

Foſ. Dance! the Devil bring me hither a Spit, a Fire-fork, I'll try whether the Monſters are impenetrable or no.

Plotw. I hope, Sir, you will not expoſe us to the Fury of the Mob, ſince we came here upon ſo courteous a Deſign.

Foſſ. Good Courteous Mr. *Mumby*, without more Ceremony, will it pleaſe you to retire to your ſubterraneous Habitation. And you, Mr. *Crocodile*, about your Buſineſs this Moment, or you ſhall change your *Nile* for the next Horſe-Pond.

Clink. Spare my *Maſquerade*.

Underp. Let it never be ſaid that the Famous Dr. *Foſſile*, ſo renowned for his Charity to Monſters, ſhould violate the Laws of Hoſpitality, and turn a poor *Alligator* naked into the Street.

Foſſ. Depoſite your *Exuviæ* then, and aſſume your Human Shape.

Underp. For that, I muſt beg your Excuſe. A Gentleman would not chuſe to be known in theſe Frolicks.

Foſſ. Then out of my Doors. Here, Footmen, out with him; out, thou Hypocrite, of an *Alligator*. [Underplot *is turn'd out.*

Sir, the Reſpect I have for Catacombs and Pyramids, will not protect you. [*A Noiſe of Mob within.*

Enter Prue.

Prue. Sir, Sir, lock your Doors, or elſe all your Monſters will run Home again to the *Indies*. Your *Crocodile* yonder has made his Eſcape; If he get but to *Somerſet Water-Gate*, he is gone for ever. [*Ex.* Prue.

Enter a Footman.

Footman. The Herbwoman ſwore ſhe knew him to be the Devil, for ſhe had met him one dark Night in St. *Pulchre*'s Church-Yard; Then the Monſter call'd a Coach, methought with the Voice of a Chriſtian; but a Sailor that came by ſaid he might be a *Crocodile* for all that, for *Crocodiles* could cry like Children, and was for killing him outright, for they were good to eat in *Egypt*; but the Conſtable cry'd, Take him alive, for what if he be an *Egyptian*, he is ſtill the King's Subject. [*Ex.* Footman. [*A Noiſe of Mob within.*

Enter Prue.

Prue. Then he was hurry'd away by the Mob. A Bull-dog ran away with Six Joints of his Tail, and the Claw of his near Foot before: At laſt by good Fortune, to ſave his Life, he fell in with the *Hockley in the Hole* Bull and

and Bear; the Maſter claim'd him for his Monſter, and ſo he is now attended by a vaſt Mob, very ſolemnly marching to *Hockley in the Hole*, with the Bear in his Front, the Bull in his Rear, and a Monkey upon each Shoulder.

Town. Mr. *Mummy*, you had beſt draw the Curtains of your Chair, or the Mob's Reſpect for the Dead will ſcarce protect you.

[*Ex.* Plotwell *in a Chair.*

Clink. My Concern for him obliges me to go ſee that he gets off ſafe, leſt any further Miſchief befall the Perſons of our Maſque.

[*Exit* Clinket.

Foſſ. Sweetly, *Horace. Nunquam ſatis*, and ſo forth. A Man can never be too cautious. Madam, ſit down by me. Pray how long is it ſince you and I have been married?

Town. Near Three Hours, Sir.

Foſſ. And what Anxieties has this Time produc'd! The dangers of Divorce! Calumniatory Letters! lewd Fellows introduced by my Niece! groundleſs Jealouſies on both Sides! even thy Virginity put to the Touchſtone! but this laſt Danger I plung'd thee in my ſelf; to leave thee in the Room with Two ſuch robuſt young Fellows.

Town. Ay, with Two young Fellows! but, my Dear, I know you did it ignorantly.

Foſſ. This is the firſt bleſt Minute of Repoſe that I have enjoy'd in Matrimony. Doſt thou know the Reaſon, my Dear, why I have choſen thee of all Womankind?

Town. My Face perhaps.

Foss. No.

Town. My Wit?

Foss. No.

Town. My Virtue and good Humour?

Foss. No. But for the natural Conformity of our Constitutions. Because thou art hot and moist in the Third Degree, and I my self cold and dry in the First.

Town. And so Nature has coupled us like the Elements.

Foss. Thou hast nothing to do but to submit thy Constitution to my Regimen.

Town. You shall find me obedient in all Things.

Foss. It is strange, yet certain, that the Intellects of the Infant depend upon the Suppers of the Parents. Diet must be prescrib'd.

Town. So the Wit of one's Posterity is determin'd by the Choice of one's Cook.

Foss. Right. You may observe how *French* Cooks, with their high *Ragousts*, have contaminated our plain *English* Understandings. Our Supper to Night is extracted from the best Authors. How delightful is this Minute of Tranquility! my Soul is at Ease. How happy shalt thou make me! thou shalt bring me the finest Boy!

[*A knocking at the Door.*

No Mortal shall enter these Doors this Day. [*Knocking again.*] Oh, it must be the News of poor Lady *Hippokekoana*'s Death. Poor Woman!

such

ſuch is the Condition of Life, ſome die, and ſome are Born, and I ſhall now make ſome Reparation for the Mortality of my Patients by the Fecundity of my Wife. My Dear, thou ſhalt bring me the fineſt Boy!

Enter Footman.

Footman. Sir, here's a Seaman from *Deptford* muſt needs ſpeak with you.

Foſſ. Let him come in. One of my Retale *Indian* Merchants, I ſuppoſe, that always brings me ſome odd Thing.

Enter Sailor *with a Child.*

What haſt thou brought me, Friend, a young Drill?

Sail. Look ye d'ye ſee, Maſter, you know beſt whether a Monkey begot him.

Foſſ. A meer Human Child!

Town. Thy Careleſneſs, *Sarſnet*, has expos'd me, I am loſt and ruin'd. O Heav'n! Heav'n? No Impudence aſſiſt me. [*Aſide.*

Foſſ. Is the Child monſtrous? Or doſt thou bring him here to take Phyſick?

Sail. I care not what he takes; ſo you take him.

Foſſ. What does the Fellow mean;

Sail. Fellow me no Fellows. My Name is *Jack Capſtone* of *Deptford*, and are not you the Man that has the Raree-Show of Oyſter-ſhells and Pebble-ſtones?

Foſſ. What if I am?

Sail. Why, then my Invoice is right, I muſt leave my Cargo here.

Town. Miſerable Woman that I am! how ſhall I ſupport this Sight! thy Baſtard brought into thy Family as ſoon as thy Bride!

Foſſ. Patience, Patience, I beſeech you. Indeed I have no Poſterity.

Town. You laſcivious Brute you.

Foſſ. Paſſion is but the tempeſtuous Cloud that obſcures Reaſon; be calm and I'll convince you. Friend, how come you to bring the Infant hither?

Sail. My Wife, poor Woman, could give him Suck no longer, for ſhe died Yeſterday Morning. There's a long Account, Maſter. It was hard to trace him to the Fountain-Head, I ſteer'd my Courſe from Lane to Lane, I ſpoke to Twenty Old Women, and at laſt was directed to a Ribbon-Shop in *Covent-Garden*, and they ſent me hither, and ſo take the Bantling and pay me his Clearings. [*Offers him the Child.*

Foſſ. I ſhall find Law for you, Sirrah. Call my Neighbour *Poſſum*, he is a Juſtice of Peace, as well as a Phyſician.

Town. Call the Man back. If you have committed one Folly, don't expoſe your ſelf by a Second.

Sail. The Gentlewoman ſays well. Come, Maſter, we all know that there is no Boarding a pretty Wench, without Charges one way or other;

other; you are a Doctor, Master, and have no Surgeons Bills to pay; and so can the better afford it.

Town. Rather than you should bring a Scandal on your Character, I will submit to be a kind Mother-in-Law.

Enter Justice Possum, *and Clark.*

Foss. Mr. Justice *Possum*, for now I must so call you, not Brother *Possum*; here is a troublesome Fellow with a Child, which he would leave in my House.

Poss. Another Man's Child? He cannot in Law.

Foss. It seemeth to me to be a Child unlawfully begotten.

Poss. A Bastard! who does he lay it to?

Foss. To our Family.

Poss. Your Family, *quatenus* a Family, being a Body Collective cannot get a Bastard. Is this Child a Bastard, honest Friend?

Sail. I was neither by when his Mother was Stow'd, nor when she was Unladen; Whether he belong to a fair Trader, or be Run Goods, I cannot tell: In short, here I was sent, and here I will leave him.

Poss. Dost thou know his Mother, Friend?

Sail. I am no Midwife, Master; I did not see him Born.

Poss. You

Poſſ. You had beſt put up this Matter, Doctor. A Man of your Years, when he has been wanton, cannot be too cautious.

Foſſ. This is all from the Purpoſe. I was married this Morning at Seven; let any Man in the leaſt acquainted with the Powers of Nature, judge whether that Human Creature could be conceived and brought to Maturity in one Forenoon.

Poſ. This is but Talk, Dr. *Foſſile.* It is well for you, though I ſay it, that you have fallen into the Hands of a Perſon, who has ſtudy'd the *Civil* and *Canon-Law* in the Point of Baſtardy. The Child is either yours or not yours.

Foſ. My Child, Mr. Juſtice!

Poſ. Look ye, Dr. *Foſſile*, you confound Filiation with Legitimation. Lawyers are of Opinion, that Filiation is neceſſary to Legitimation, but not *è contra.* [*The Child cries.*

Foſ. I would not ſtarve any of my own Species, get the Infant ſome Water-Pap. But Mr. Juſtice ——

Poſ. The Proofs, I ſay, Doctor, of Filiation are Five. Nomination enunciatively pronounc'd, ſtrong Preſumptions, and circumſtantial Proofs —

Foſ. What is all this to me? I tell you, I know nothing of the Child.

Poſ. Signs of Paternal Piety, Similitude of Features, and Commerce with the Mother. And firſt of the firſt, Nomination. Has the Doctor ever been heard to call the Infant, Son?

Town.

Town. He has call'd him Child, ſince he came into this Room. You have indeed, Mr. *Foſſile.*

Poſ. Bring hither the Doctor's great Bible. —— Let us examine in the Blank Leaf whether he be enroll'd among the reſt of his Children.

Foſ. I tell you, I never had any Children. I ſhall grow diſtracted, I ſhall ——

Poſ. But did you give any Orders againſtregiſtring the Child by the Name of *Foſſile?*

Foſ. How was it poſſible!

Poſ. Set down that, Clark. He did not prohibit the Regiſtring the Child in his own Name. We our ſelves have obſerved one Sign of Fatherly Tenderneſs; Clark, ſet down the Water-Pap he order'd juſt now. Come we now ——

Foſ. What a Jargon is this!

Poſ. Come we now, I ſay, to that which the Lawyers call *magnum naturæ Argumentum*, Similitude of Features. Bring hither the Child, Friend; Dr. *Foſſile*, look upon me. The unequal Circle of the Infant's Face, ſomewhat reſembles the Inequality of the Circumference of your Countenance; He has alſo the Vituline or Calf-like Concavity of the Profile of your Viſage.

Foſ. Piſh.

Poſ. And he is ſomewhat Beetle-brow'd, and his Noſe will riſe with time to an equal Prominence with the Doctor's.

Town. Indeed he has ſomewhat of your Noſe, Mr. *Foſſile.*

Foſ.

Foſ. Ridiculous!

Town. The Child is comely.

Poſ. Conſider the large Aperture of his Mouth.

Sail. Nay, the Tokens are plain enough. I have the Fellow of him at home; but my Wife told me Two Days ago, that this with the Wall-Eye, and Splay-Foot belong'd to you, Sir.

[Prue *runs a-croſs the Stage with a Letter, which* Foſſile *ſnatches from her.*

Foſ. Whither are you going ſo faſt, Huſſy? I will examine every thing within theſe Walls. [*Ex.* Prue.] [*Reads.* For *Richard Plotwell*, Eſq; This Letter unravels the whole Affair: As ſhe is an unfortunate Relation of mine, I muſt beg you would act with Diſcretion.

[*Gives* Poſſum *the Letter.*

Poſ. Reads. *Sir, the Child which you father'd is return'd back upon my Hands. Your* Drury-Lane *Friends have treated me with ſuch Rudeneſs, that they told me in plain Terms I ſhould be Damn'd. How unfortunate ſoever my Offspring is, I hope you at leaſt will defend the Reputation of the unhappy* Phæbe Clinket.

——— As you ſay, Doctor, the Caſe is but too plain; every Circumſtance hits.

Enter Clinket.

Clink. 'Tis very uncivil, Sir, to break open one's Letters.

Fof. Would I had not; and that the Contents of it had been a Secret to me and all Mankind for ever. Wretched Creature, to what a miſerable Condition has thy Poetry reduced Thee!

Clink. I am not in the leaſt mortified with the Accident. I know it has happen'd to many of the moſt famous Daughters of *Apollo*; and to my ſelf ſeveral times.

Fof. I am Thunderſtruck at her Impudence! Several Times?

Clink. I have had one return'd upon my Hands every Winter for theſe Five Years paſt. I may, perhaps, be excell'd by others in Judgment and Correctneſs of Manners, but for Fertility and Readineſs of Conception, I will yield to nobody.

Foſſ. Bleſs me, whence had ſhe this luxuriant Conſtitution!

Poſſ. Patience, Sir. Perhaps the Lady may be Married.

Town. 'Tis infamous, Mr. *Foſſile*, to keep her in your Houſe; yet though you turn her out of Doors, uſe her with ſome Humanity; I will take care of the Child.

Clink. I can find no *Denoüement* of all this Converſation. Where is the Crime, I pray, of writing a Tragedy? I ſent it to *Drury-Lane* Houſe to be Acted; and here it is return'd by the wrong *Gouſt* of the Actors.

Poſ. This Incident has ſomewhat embaraſſed us. But what mean you here, Madam, by this Expreſſion? Your Offspring.

Clink. My

Clink. My Tragedy, the Offspring of my Brain. One of His Majesty's Justices of Peace, and not understand the use of the Metaphor!

Pos. Doctor, you have used much Artifice, and many Demurrers; but the Child must lye at your Door at last. Friend, speak plain what thou knowest of this Matter.

Fos. Let me relate my Story. This Morning, I married this Lady, and brought her from her Lodgings, at Mrs. *Chambers*'s, in *King-Street, Covent-Garden.*

Sail. Mrs. *Chambers!* To that Place I was directed, where liv'd the Maid that put the Bantling out to be Nurs'd by my Wife for her Lady; and who she was, 'tis none of our Business to enquire.

Poss. Dost thou know the Name of this Maid?

Sail. Let me consider——*Lutestring.*

Foss. *Sarsnet*, thou meanest.

Sail. *Sarsnet*, that's right.

Town. I'll turn her out of my House this Moment. Filthy Creature!

Poss. The Evidence is plain. You have Cohabitation with the Mother, Doctor, *Currat Lex.* And you must keep the Child.

Foss. Your Decree is unjust, Sir, and I'll seek my Remedy at Law. As I never was espoused, I never had Carnal Knowledge of any Woman; and my Wife, Mrs. *Susanna Townley*, is a pure Virgin at this Hour for me.

Poss.

Poſſ. *Suſanna Townley!* *Suſanna Townley!* Look how runs the Warrant you drew up this Morning. [*Clark gives him a Paper.*

Madam, a Word in private with you. [*Whiſpers her.*] Doctor, my Lord Chief Juſtice has ſome Buſineſs with this Lady.

Foſſ. My Lord Chief Juſtice Buſineſs with my Wife!

Poſſ. To be plain with you, Doctor *Foſſile*, you have for theſe three Hours entertain'd another Man's Wife. Her Husband, Lieutenant *Bengall*, is juſt return'd from the *Indies*, and this Morning took out a Warrant from me for an Elopement; it will be more for your Credit to part with her privately, than ſuffer her publickly to be carry'd off by a Tipſtaff.

Foſſ. Surprizing have been the Events of this Day; but this, the ſtrangeſt of all, ſettles my future Repoſe. Let her go— I have not diſhonoured the Bed of Lieutenant *Bengall* — Hark ye Friend! Do you follow her with that Badge of her Infamy.

Poſſ. By your Favour, Doctor, I never reverſe my Judgment. The Child is yours: For it cannot belong to a Man who has been three Years abſent in the *Eaſt-Indies*. Leave the Child.

Sail. I find you are out of Humour, Maſter. So I'll call to-morrow for his Clearings.

[*Sailor lays down the Child, and* Exit *with* Poſſum, Clark, *and* Townley.]

Clink. Uncle, by this Day's Adventure, every one has got ſomething. Lieutenant *Bengall* has

got his Wife again. You a fine Child; and I a Plot for a Comedy; and I'll this Moment ſet about it. [*Ex.* Clinket.

Foſſ. What muſt be, muſt be. [*Takes up the Child.*] *Foſſile* thou didſt want Poſterity: Here behold thou haſt it. A Wife thou didſt not want; Thou haſt none. But thou art careſſing a Child that is not thy own. What then? A Thouſand, and a Thouſand Husbands are doing the ſame Thing this very Inſtant; and the Knowledge of Truth is deſirable, and makes thy Caſe the better. What ſignifies whether a Man beget his Child or not? How ridiculous is the Act it ſelf, ſaid the great Emperor *Antoninus*! I now look upon my ſelf as a *Roman* Citizen; It is better that the Father ſhould adopt the Child, than that the Wife ſhould adopt the Father. [*Exit* Foſſile.

EPI-

EPILOGUE

Spoken by Mrs. *Oldfield.*

THE ancient Epilogue, *as Criticks write,*
Was, clap your Hands, excuſe us, and good-night;
The modern always was a kind Eſſay
To reconcile the Audience to the Play:
More poliſh'd we; of late have learnt to fly
At Parties, Treaties, Nations, Miniſtry.
Our Author more genteelly leaves theſe Brawls
To Coffee-houſes, *and to* Coblers *Stalls.*
His very Monſters are of ſweet Condition;
None but the Crocodile's *a Politician;*
He reaps the Bleſſings of his double Nature,
And, Trimmer *like, can live on Land or Water;*
Yet this ſame Monſter ſhould be kindly treated,
He lik'd a Lady's Fleſh—— but not to eat it.
As for my other Spark, my fav'rite Mummy,
His Feats were ſuch, ſmart Youths! as might become ye;
Dead as he ſeem'd, he had ſure Signs of Life;
His Hieroglyphicks pleas'd the Doctor's Wife.
Whom can our well-bred Poeteſs diſpleaſe?
She writ like Quality—— with wondrous eaſe:
All her Offence was harmleſs want of Wit;
Is that a Crime?——ye Powers, preſerve the Pit!
My Doctor too, to give the Devil his due,
When ev'ry Creature did his Spouſe purſue,

(Men

EPILOGUE.

(Men ſound and living, bury'd Fleſh, dry'd Fiſh)
Was e'en as civil as a Wife could wiſh.
Yet he was ſomewhat ſaucy with his Vial;
What, put young Maids to that unnat'ral Trial!
So hard a Teſt! why, if you needs will make it,
Faith, let us marry firſt——and then we'll take it.
Who could be angry, though like Foſſile *teaz'd?*
Conſider, in three Hours, the Man was eas'd.
How many of you are for Life beguil'd,
And keep as well the Mother, as the Child!
None but a Tar *could be ſo tender-hearted,*
To claim a Wife that had been three Years parted;
Would you do this, my Friends?—believe me, never:
When modiſhly you part——you part for ever.
Join then your Voices, be the Play excus'd
For once, though no one living is abus'd;
To that bright Circle which commands our Duties,
To you ſuperior Eighteen-penny Beauties,
To the lac'd Hat and Cockard of the Pit,
To All, in one Word, we our Cauſe ſubmit,
Who think Good-breeding is a-kin to Wit.

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